

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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BLACK SHEEP!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LAND AT LAST," "KISSING THE ROD,"
&c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XI. THE AMERICAN LETTERS.

STEWART ROUTH was as hard a man as could readily be found, but his hardness was not proof against his meeting with George Dallas, and he showed Harriet how great a trial it was to him, and how much he feared his own constancy, when he told her he thought she had better not be present at their meeting. The curse of an unholy alliance had fallen upon these two, and was now beginning to make itself felt. Each was desirous to conceal from the other the devices to which they were compelled to resort, in order to keep up the false appearances to which they were condemned; in all their life there was no time in which they were free from restraint, except in solitude. But, though the effect was in each case the same, the origin was widely different. Harriet suffered for her husband's sake; he, entirely for his own. He had calculated that if anything in his appearance, voice, and manner, should escape his control, George would be certain to impute it to the natural feelings of horror and regret with which he would have received the intelligence conveyed to him by Harriet, of George's discovery of the identity of the murdered man.

"You had better remain up-stairs until I call you," Routh had said to Harriet, "when Dallas comes to dinner. It will be easier for you," he added. Harriet was sitting listlessly by her dressing-table while he spoke, and he stood behind her chair, and looked gloomily at the reflexion of her face in the glass.

She smiled faintly. "Thank you, Stewart," she said; "it will be easier." Then, after a brief pause, "Would you very much mind my not going down to dinner at all?"

So far from minding it, Routh instantly felt that her absence would be a great relief. It would enable him to sound George thoroughly, to scheme upon whatever discoveries he should make concerning his future plans; and then, Harriet had done all the hard work, had prepared the way for him, had got over the difficulty and the danger. A little unpleasantness, some disagreeable emotion, must indeed be encountered, that was inevitable, but everything

might go off well, and if so, Harriet's restraining presence, Harriet's face, with its constant reminder in it, would be much better out of sight.

"Not at all," he answered. "Stay up-stairs if you like. I'll tell Dallas you are a little knocked up, but will be all right in the morning."

"He will not be surprised, I dare say," she replied, "though it was not my way to be knocked up, formerly."

"Nor to be always harping on one string, either; and I can't say there's a change for the better," said Routh, roughly. Once or twice of late the innate ruffianism of the man had come out towards her, from whom it had once been so scrupulously concealed. But she did not heed it; not a quiver crossed the drooping rigid face, at which Routh once more glanced covertly before he left the room. It would have been impossible to tell whether she had even heard him.

Routh went down to the well-appointed dining-room, so different to the scene of the dinners of which George had formerly partaken, in the character of his guest. Wherever Harriet was, neatness and propriety never were absent, but there was something more than neatness and propriety in Routh's house now. Nevertheless, the look which the master of the house cast upon the well-laid, well-lighted table, with its perfect, unobtrusive, unpretentious appointments, was full of gloom. He wished he had not come down so soon; the inevitable meeting assumed a more portentous aspect with every minute that it was delayed; he wished he had not told Harriet to remain in her room. The fact was, Routh was staggered by the first failure of his plans. Everything had gone so right with him; his calculations had been fulfilled so exactly, so unfailingly, until now, and this unexpected accident had befallen through a blunder of his own. True, Harriet had met it with amazing tact, and had so treated it, that if only it could be further dexterously managed, it might be turned to ultimate advantage, and an incalculable strengthening of his position. Let him keep his thoughts to that view of the question, and keep his nerves still. Were they going to play him false now, his nerves, which had never failed him before? So Mr. Stewart Routh passed a very unpleasant quarter of an hour before his expected guest arrived. He had just had recourse, as much in weakness as in nervousness, to a flask of brandy which stood on the sideboard, and had drank off half a glass—

ful, when a knock at the door was quickly answered by the grave and correct man-servant, who formed an important and eminently respectable feature of the improved household of the Rouths, and the well-known quick tread of Dallas crossed the hall.

"Well, Routh, old fellow!"

"George, my boy; delighted to see you!"—and the meeting was over; and Routh, looking into the young man's face, saw that not a trace of suspicion rested upon it, and that the material before him was as plastic as ever.

"Harriet is not very well this evening," said Routh, "and begs you will excuse her if she does not make her appearance. I undertook to make it all right, and indeed I am rather glad we should be alone just at first. I have so much to say and to hear, and Harriet has had a long talk with you already."

"Yes," said George, and his smile was at once overcast, and his face darkened into gloom, "I had a long talk with her. Of course, Routh, she told you the dreadful discovery I have made, and the curious way in which I am implicated in this ghastly affair."

"She told me all about it, my dear fellow," returned Routh. "But here comes dinner, and we must postpone discussion until afterwards. I can only say now that I think Harriet's view of the matter perfectly correct, and her advice the soundest possible; it generally is, you know of old." And then Routh made a slight signal suggestive of caution to his guest, and the two men stood by the fireplace and talked of trifles while the irreproachable man-servant set the dishes upon the table, assisted by a neat parlour-maid.

While far more serious thoughts were busy in George's mind, over the surface of it was passing observation of the changed order of things, and an amused perception of the alteration in Routh himself. It was as he had said in his letter—he had assumed the responsibility, the pose, the prosperity of the genuine plodding "City man;" and he looked the part to absolute perfection. "And yet," George thought, "he knows that one who was with us two the last time we met has met with a violent death; he knows that I am in a position as painful and perilous as it is extraordinary, and that he is indirectly mixed up with the dreadful event, and he is as cool and unconcerned as possible. I suppose it is constitutional, this callousness; but I'm not sure it is very enviable. However, one thing is certain—it makes him the very best adviser one can possibly have under such circumstances. He won't be carried away by the horror of the circumstances, anyhow."

The dinner proceeded, and George yielded rapidly to the influences which had been so powerful, and which he had been so determined to resist, when out of Routh's presence and under the sway of his penitence and his determination to reform. The conversation of Routh asserted all its old charm; the man's consummate knowledge of the world, his varied experience, the perfect refinement and tact which

he could display at will, the apparent putting off of old things, the tone of utter respectability which enabled George's newly-shaped conscience to consent to the fascination as really as his predilections, had more than ever an irresistible attraction for the young man. During dinner, which, in the altered state of affairs, involved the presence of the servant, Routh kept the conversation almost entirely to Dallas's own doings, plans, and prospects. He knew Amsterdam well, and talked of Dutch art and the history of the Low Countries with much skill and fluency. Without an allusion which could supply material for the curiosity and the gossip of the servants, he made George understand that the Bohemian element had been completely banished from his life and its associations; he sketched a plan of London life for George, moderately prosperous, quite practical, and entirely inoffensive. He made him, in short, as ready to congratulate himself on the resumption of their intimacy in the present phase of his moral being, as he had been to rejoice in its formation under former conditions.

Routh's spirits rose with his senses. He felt a depraved pride in the devilish skill he possessed in his grand faculty of deception. He excelled in it, he revelled in its exercise, and he had not enjoyed it, in this orthodox way, of late. He had been making money, it is true, and doing some real work as well as a good deal of swindling in the process, but he had had only the opportunity of using a certain set of his faculties. His persuasive eloquence, his personal influence, his skilful and expansive but shrewd falsehood, had lain dormant for some time. As a singer who has lost his voice for a time suddenly finds the liquid notes filling the air with all their accustomed power and sweetness, and exults in the recovered faculty, so Stewart Routh marked the pleasure, the enthusiasm, almost enabling George to forget the coming painful topic of discussion from which only a few minutes divided them, as he listened to the voice of the charmer, who had never before charmed him so wisely nor so well.

At length the wine was set upon the table, and then they were alone; and by this time, so complete did Routh feel his resumption of power over George Dallas, that it was with indifference only very little feigned that he said:

"And now, George, let us go into this sad business about poor Deane. It has quite floored Harriet, as I dare say you guessed."

"And so you give me the same counsel as Harriet has given me," said George, when he had to tell his story all over again, and had worked himself up into a new fit of excitement over the horror of the murder, and the dreadful idea of the ignorance of the deed in which the dead man's relatives still remained.

"I do, indeed, George," said Routh, solemnly; "in taking any other course, you will expose yourself to certain difficulty, and, indeed, to imminently probable danger. While you have been telling me all this, I have been thinking how

fortunate it was that I was away at the time, and so down upon my luck, that I never knew or thought about any public affairs, and so did not hear of the murder except in the vaguest way. In the peculiar lustre of our London civilisation, you know, George, somebody found dead in the river is so frequent a mote, that nobody thinks about it."

"Not in a general way," said George; "but they made so much of this, and were so confident that it was a political affair, I cannot understand how any of us escaped hearing of it."

"Yes," acquiesced Routh, "it is very extraordinary, but such things do happen. And rather fortunate, it seems, that they do, for if I had dropped in on the inquest, it would have been very awkward for you."

"Why?" said George; "after all, the truth must have come out, and all this misery about my mother would have been avoided."

An evil look from Routh's eye lighted for a moment on the young man's unconscious face, then glanced away, as he said:

"You forget that all I could have said must have strongly favoured the notion that the man who wore the coat which the waiter swore to, and was last seen with Deane, was the last person who ever saw him alive. If I had had time to think, of course I shouldn't have said a word about it; but if I had been hurried into speaking, that is what I must have said. Come, George, you are much too sensitive about this matter. Of course, I'm sorry for Deane, but I care a great deal more for you, and I decline to look at any part of this matter except such as concerns you. As to his relatives, as that part of the business appears to distress you most keenly, I must set your mind at rest by informing you that he had not a near relation in the world."

"Indeed," said George. "How do you know?"

"He told me so," said Routh. "You will say, perhaps, that is not very trustworthy evidence, but I think we may take it in this particular instance for more than its general worth. He was the coldest, hardest, most selfish fellow I ever knew in the whole course of my experience, which had included a good deal of seoundreldom, and he seemed so thoroughly to appreciate the advantages of such isolation, that I believe it really did exist."

"He was certainly a mystery in every way," said George. "Where did he live? We never knew him—at least I never did—except loafing about at taverns, and places of the kind."

"I don't know where he lived," said Routh; "he never gave me an address, or a rendezvous, except at some City eating-house, or West-end billiard-room."

"How very extraordinary that no one recognised the description. It was in every way remarkable, and the fur-lined coat must have been known to some one. If I had seen any mention of the murder, I should have remembered that coat in a moment."

"Would you?" said Routh. "Well, it would have thrown me off the scent, for I never hap-

pened to see it. An American coat, no doubt. However, I have a theory, which I think you will agree with, and which is this: I suspect he had been living somewhere in another name—he told me he wasn't always known by that of Deane—under not very creditable circumstances, and as he must have had some property, which, had he been identified, must have been delivered up to the authorities, those in the secret have very wisely held their tongues."

"You think there was a woman in the case?"

Routh smiled a superior smile.

"Of course I think so; and knowing as much, or as little of the man, as you and I know, we are not likely to blame her much for consulting her own interests exclusively. This seems a curious case to us, because we happen to know about it; but just think, in this enormous city, in this highly criminal age, how common such things must be. How many persons may not have dropped out of existence since you and I last met, utterly unknown and uncared for, amid the mass of human beings here? It is no such rare thing, George, believe me, and you must listen to reason in this matter, and not run absurd risks to do an imaginary piece of justice."

This was Harriet's counsel merely put in colder, more worldly words. Routh watched his listener keenly as he gave it, and saw that his purpose was gained. He would have been glad now to have turned the conversation into some other channel; and did partially succeed in directing it to Dallas's literary prospects and intentions, but only for a time. George pertinaciously came back to the murder, to his mother's state, to his apprehensions that she might never recover, and to his altered feelings towards Mr. Carruthers.

Routh made very effective use of the latter topic. He enlarged upon the pride and sensitiveness of Mr. Carruthers; adverted to the pleasure with which, in case of her recovery, his mother would hail the better state of things for which Mr. Carruthers's letter to his step-son, combined with George's adoption of a new and steady career, would afford an opening; and congratulated George upon having been saved from taking any step which, by bringing public notice upon himself in so terrible a matter, must have incensed the proud man, and irritated him against him incalculably.

George was amenable to this line of reasoning, and with only occasional divergence from the main topic of their discourse, the evening passed away, and the two men parted for the night, it having been agreed that Harriet should be taken into consultation in the morning, and a well-considered letter written to Mr. Carruthers.

George Dallas was in the dining-room on the following morning before Routh and Harriet came in, and he found a letter directed to himself, in a hand with which he was unacquainted, on the breakfast-table. He broke the seal with some alarm and much curiosity. A slip of paper folded round two thin, limp letters, formed the enclosure; it bore only the words: "My

dear boy, I forgot to give you these letters. You had better read them. I think they are from your uncle. E. B."

George sat down by the window, through which the soft air of a morning, bright and beautiful even in London, came refreshingly in. He looked at the postmarks of the two letters, and broke the seal of that which bore the earliest date, first. As he read the letter, which was long, and closely written, an occasional exclamation escaped him, and when he had finished its perusal, he threw it hastily down, and impatiently tore open the other. This one, on the contrary, was brief; he had read the few lines it contained in a few minutes, with a face expressive of the utmost astonishment, when Harriet, whose noiseless step had escaped his hearing, entered the room.

Without pausing to exchange the customary greeting, she came quickly towards him, and asked him "What was the matter? Had he any bad news?"

"Not bad news, but most astonishing, most unexpected news, Mrs. Routh. These letters have been sent to me from Poyning; they are written to my mother by my uncle, her only brother, and they announce his immediate arrival in England. How fortunate that Ellen should have sent them to me. But I don't know what to do about sending the news to my mother. She ought to know it. What can I do?"

"Communicate with Mr. Carruthers at once, George," said Harriet, in the tone of quiet decision with which she was accustomed to settle matters submitted to her judgment. "He is with her, and knows what she can bear. Sit down now and have some breakfast, and tell me about this uncle of yours. I never heard you mention him."

She took her place at the head of the table. She was dressed, as he had been accustomed to see her, with neatness and taste; there was no change in her appearance in that respect, yet there was a change—a change which had struck George painfully yesterday, and which, in the midst of all the agitation of today, he could not keep from noticing.

"Are you well, Mrs. Routh?" he asked her, anxiously. "Are you sure you are well? I don't like your looks."

"Never mind my looks, George," Harriet said, cheerfully; "I am very well. Get on with your breakfast and your story. Routh will be here presently, and I want to know all about it before he comes. He gets impatient at my feminine curiosity, you know."

The smile with which she spoke was but the ghost of her former smile, and George still looked at her strangely, but he obeyed her, and proceeded with his breakfast and his story.

"I don't know very much about my mother's family," he said, "because they did not like her marriage with my father, and she kept aloof from them, and her parents were dead before she had the opportunity of appeasing them by making the fine match they would have considered her marriage with Mr. Carruthers to

be. I know that some of their relatives were settled in America, some at New York, some in South Carolina, and my mother's brother, Mark Felton—queer name, puritanical and fanatical, with a touch of the association of assassination about it—was sent out to New York when quite a child. I forgot to tell you it was my mother's step-father and her mother who objected to her first marriage—her own father died when she was an infant—and on her mother's second marriage with a Mr. Creswick—a poor, proud, dissipated fellow, I fancy, though I never heard much about him—the American branch of the family sent for the boy. My mother has told me they would have taken her too, and her step-father would not have made the least objection—we haven't been lucky in step-fathers, Mrs. Routh—but her mother would not stand it; and so she kept her child. Not for many years, for she married my father when she was only seventeen. Her brother was just twenty then, and had been taken into the rich American firm of his relatives, and was a prosperous man. She knew very little of him, of course. I believe he took the same view of her marriage as her mother had taken; at all events, the first direct communication between them took place when my mother was left a handsome, and poor, young widow, with one boy, who did not make much delay about proving himself the graceless and ungrateful son you know him to have been."

George's voice faltered, and an expression of pain crossed his face. Harriet looked at him kindly, and laid her soft white hand on his.

"That is all over, you know," she said. "You will not err in that way again."

"But the consequences, Mrs. Routh, the consequences. Think of my mother *now*! However," and he drew a long breath, and threw his shoulders back, like a man who tries to shift a burden, "I must go on with my story. There's not much more to tell, however. My mother might have had a home for herself and me in her brother's house, but she could not bear dependence, and has told me often that she regarded unknown relatives as the most formidable kind of strangers. Her brother's wife made him resent my mother's determination to remain in England, and do the best she could for us both on our small means. Of course, all this was an old story long before I knew anything about it, and I fancy that it is only lately any correspondence has taken place between my mother and her brother. From this letter" (he touched the first he had read) "I can divine the nature of that correspondence. My mother," said George, sadly, "has appealed to her brother on behalf of her prodigal son, and her brother has told her his sorrows in return; they have been heavy, and in one respect not unlike her own. He, too, has an only son, and seems to find little happiness in the fact."

"Did you not know of your cousin's existence until now?" asked Harriet.

"Oh yes, I knew of it, in a kind of way; in fact, I just knew he existed, and no more. I

don't think my mother knew more. I fancy in some previous letter he told her of his wife's death, and the general unsatisfactoriness of Arthur."

"He—your uncle, I mean—is then a widower?"

"Yes," replied George. "I won't bother you with the whole of this long letter, Mrs. Routh; the gist of it is this: My cousin, Arthur Felton, is not a good son, nor a good anything I fancy, for I find my uncle congratulating my mother upon my affection for her, my good feeling, in spite of all—(bless the poor man! he little knew how his words would wound, and how ill-deserved is the extenuation!)—and prophesying all manner of good things about me. It appears this hopeful son of his has been in Europe for some months, and probably in London for some months too, as my uncle says—stay, here is the passage: 'Arthur has with him a letter of introduction to you and Mr. Carruthers, some trifles from this side of the world which I thought you might like, and my instructions to make his cousin's acquaintance as soon as possible. You speak of George as living habitually in London; I hope by this time they have met, are good friends, and are, perhaps, chumming together. I have not heard from Arthur for some time. He is a careless correspondent, and not at any time so regardful of the feelings of other people as he might be. I dare say the first intelligence I shall have of him from England, as he cannot possibly want money'—that looks bad, Mrs. Routh," said George, breaking off abruptly, and looking up at her; "that looks bad—'as he cannot possibly want money, will be from you. I know you will receive him kindly, and I earnestly hope he may make a favourable impression on Mr. Carruthers.'" Here George left off reading the letter, and looked blankly at Harriet.

"And he has never presented himself at Poynings, has he?" she asked.

"Never, that I know of; and of course Ellen Brookes would have told me, if he had. Besides, you see this letter was late for the mail, and arrived with this other one. My mother never saw either, and they have been lying more than six weeks at Poynings."

"No doubt your cousin is still in Paris. All Americans delight in Paris. He would be in no hurry to leave Paris, depend on it, if he had no more interesting acquaintance than that of an aunt and a cousin to make in London, and as much time before him as he chose."

"I should think with you, Mrs. Routh, only that this letter, written at New York on the third of April, says my uncle had heard from Arthur, who had merely written him a line from London, saying: 'Here I am. Particulars by next mail.' The mail brought no particulars, and my uncle writes to my mother, subsequently to this long letter, which is cheerful enough, you'll observe, that he is a prey to a presentiment that something is wrong with Arthur, also that he has conceived the strongest wish to come to England and see her, and especially to

see me—that he has sufficient money and leisure to gratify the inclination—that he will wait for the chance of further intelligence of Arthur, and to arrange certain business matters, a month longer, and then come to England. He seems to have formed a remarkably elementary notion of my respected step-father's manners, customs, and general disposition, for he proposes to present himself at Poynings immediately on his arrival, and never appears to entertain the least misgiving as to the cordiality of his reception. He must have been astonished at getting no answer to either letter, and I should think must have had his presentiments considerably sharpened and strengthened by the fact."

Here George referred to the date of the later of the two letters, and exclaimed:

"By Jove! I should not be surprised if he were at Poynings now!"

At this moment Routh entered the room, and, in his turn, had the new aspect of affairs explained to him, but at no great length. He displayed very little interest in the matter, thought it very probable that Mr. Felton might have arrived in England, or even at Poynings, but did not see what George could do in that case.

"You can't go and entertain another man at a house where you haven't the entrée yourself," he said. "I suppose the old woman will let you know if he really comes to Poynings. In the mean time, send the letters on to Mr. Carruthers. You expect to get his address from some girl or other—his niece, I think I understood Harriet—and ask what is to be done. It's rather a lucky turn up, Dallas, I take it, and will help your good-boy intentions towards your step-father wonderfully, to have a rich uncle to act as a connecting-link between you. By-the-by, he's sure to set you up in life, George, and periodical literature will be robbed of a shining luminary."

George did not altogether like the tone in which all this was said. It was a little sneering, and altogether careless. Nothing was so difficult to Routh, as it always is to men of his class, as the sustained assumption of interest in any affairs but their own; and now that his anxieties of the previous day were relieved, and he had no immediate object in which Dallas was concerned, to gain, he was impatient of any interruption of his immediate pursuits, and harsh and rough with him. He sat down, and ate his breakfast hastily, while he read a heap of letters which lay beside his plate.

"I don't know, indeed," George had replied good humouredly to the speech which had jarred upon him; "but you are busy, Routh, and I won't trouble you with my business just now. Mrs. Routh and I will discuss the letter to Mr. Carruthers."

"A telegram for Mr. Dallas," said the irreproachable servant, who entered the room while George was speaking. "Please to sign this, sir."

Routh looked up from his letters, Harriet set down the teapot, and quietly taking up the slip of paper which the man had laid upon the table by George's elbow, signed it with his name,

writing it with a pencil which hung at her waist. The servant left the room, and George said :

"I was not wrong. This is from my uncle, and it comes from Amherst. He says : 'Meet me at Morley's Hotel this evening, at six.'"

"Very odd," said Routh. "Well, George, I am sure I wish you all manner of luck with your American uncle."

He had taken up his hat and gloves as he spoke, and now rang for the servant, whom he directed to call a hansom. The man went to the door, and transferred the commission to a street-boy lingering about there, who ran off, and returned in two minutes with the required vehicle. George and Routh were standing on the steps as the boy reappeared, talking. They shook hands, and Routh was stepping into the cab, when George followed him, and said, in a whisper :

"Was it not extraordinary the boy did not recognise poor Deane?"

"What boy?" said Routh, in astonishment, and stepping back on to the flagway.

"Why, that boy ; the boy you always employ. He brought you my message the other day. Don't you remember it was he who brought your note to poor Deane that day at the tavern?"

"I did not remember ; I did not particularly notice," said Routh. "Good-bye." And he jumped into the cab, and was driven away.

George went back into the house, eyed curiously by Jim Swain, who touched his cap as he passed.

THE DEAD LOCK IN ITALY.

A LETTER FROM AN ENGLISHMAN IN ROME, TO AN ITALIAN IN LONDON.

"You are visiting Rome for the fourth time. You have leisure at your command, you have eyes in your head, and your sympathies in the Italian question are on the liberal side. Rome is now on the eve of a change which may be felt all over Europe. Tell me, in my exile, how Rome looks."

This very natural request of yours reaches me, my good friend, on the fifteenth of November. In one calendar month from that date, the French troops are bound, under the Convention, to leave the Pope and the People to settle their differences together. Must I tell you truly how Rome looks, under these circumstances? Prepare yourself to be astonished; prepare yourself to be disappointed. Rome looks as Rome looked when I was here last, nearly four years since—as Rome looked when I was here, for the second time, eleven years since—as Rome looked, when I was here, for the first time, twenty-eight years since. New hotels have been opened, in the interval, I grant you; the Pincian Hill has been improved; a central railway station has been made; an old church has been discovered at St. Clemente; a new church has been built on the ruins of the Basilica of St. Paolo; Seltzer water is to be had; crinolines are to be seen; the hackney-coachmen have been reformed. But, I repeat, nevertheless, the

Rome that I first remember in '38 is, in all essentials, the Rome that I now see in '66. Nobody walking through the city, nobody looking at the people and the priests, would have the faintest suspicion of the change which you tell me is at hand, of the convulsion that may be coming in a month's time.

What is the secret of this extraordinary apathy? I take the secret to be, that the Roman Catholic Religion sticks fast—and that the people stick fast with it. I may be quite wrong, but the impression produced on my mind by what I have seen and heard in Italy this time is—that the Pope's position is, even yet, by no means the desperate position which the liberal newspapers represent it to be. I see three chances still for His Holiness and the Priest. First, the enormous religious influence at their disposal. Secondly, the miserable dearth (since Cavour's death) of commanding ability in the civil and military administration of the Italian Kingdom. Thirdly, the inbred national defects of the Italian character.

Don't crumple up my letter, and throw it into the fire! Don't say, "The priests have got hold of him! My friend is nothing better than a reactionary and a Jesuit after all!" No Englishman living, is a heartier friend to the Italian cause than I am. No Englishman living, desires more earnestly than I do to see this nation great, prosperous, and free, from one end of the peninsula to the other. But, there are two sides to every question—the shady side, and the bright. Italian liberals and English liberals have agreed long enough (in my opinion) to look at Italian politics on the bright side only. Give the shady side its turn. When an individual man is in a difficulty, it is universally admitted that his best preparation for getting out of it, is, to look the worst in the face. What is true of individuals, in this case, is surely true of nations—doubly true, I venture to think, of your nation. Suffer a barbarous Englishman to speak the rude truth. The very last thing you are any of you willing to do, is, to look the worst in the face. Give me your arm, and let us look at it together.

You have been twenty years in England; you are almost—though, fortunately for my chance of convincing you, not quite—an Englishman. Have you noticed, in the time during which you have inhabited my country, what the religious influence can do, applied to purely political and purely worldly objects? Why, even in my country, where Religion expressly assumes to leave thought free, and to let men decide for themselves—the so-called religious influence, applied to political and social ends, fights from a 'vantage-ground in the minds of the masses of mankind equally above the reach of reason and of right.

If the (always so-called) religious influence can do this in England, what sort of enemy have you Italians to deal with, in the religious influence of Rome? You have a system against you here, which for generation after generation, and century after century, has put the priest before

the people with his hand held out, and the one everlasting formula on his lips: "Let me think for you, and I will take you to heaven." For generation after generation, and for century after century, the people have taken the priest's hand on those terms. The greatest of human writers, the noblest of human beliefs—patience under worldly trials, consolation under afflictions, the most sacred domestic ties, the very ledge of immortality itself—have all been held through century after century, for millions and millions of your people, in the priest's hand. In the priest's hand they are held still—and you have got him against you.

Yes! here, in his central stronghold, the priest's immovable composure has its old foundation, to this day, in the priest's consciousness of his power. The political tyranny that he administers—the infamous misgovernment that he permits—has alienated you, and thousands of men like you. But he has got your wives and your daughters; he has got the influence of the mothers over the children, and the other stronger influence yet of the women over the men. Nay, to come to individual instances of note and mark, he has even got your King. It is notorious to everybody out of England—though it has been carefully concealed *in* England—that there is a religious side to Victor Emmanuel's character, as well as a political side, and that he presents to this day the curiously anomalous phenomenon of a zealous Papist who is in disgrace with the Pope.

But I am drifting into general considerations, and am forgetting that it is my business to give you the results of my own personal observations, such as they are.

I have attended more than one of the Catholic church-services on Sundays. I have walked again and again over those remoter quarters of Rome in which the life of the people shows itself most strikingly and unrestrainedly to strangers. Go where I may, I see no change in the congregations, since my first experience of them; I discover no such phenomenon as a threatening attitude among the people. Last Sunday morning, I went to a "solemn function" at the church of St. Martin; then, to St. Peter's, to Vespers, and Catechism in the afternoon; then, all through the Trastevere, where all the people were out enjoying the lovely sunshine; then, back again, across the river, and round about another populous quarter, to another "solemn function." In all this peregrination I looked carefully for any signs of a change anywhere, and saw none. The church ceremonies were as superb and as impressive as ever, and the congregations (the men included, mind) just as numerous and just as devout. Four years since, I saw the catechising at St. Peter's—the boys openly taught under one of the aisles, and the girls secretly taught behind a screen, under another. On that occasion I noticed that the girls all respectfully kissed the priest's hand when they came out from the screen, and were dismissed. There was the whole thing, last Sunday, going on again as usual—the much-enduring boys kicking their

legs on the forms, and the nicely trained girls crowding round the priest to kiss his hand as they went out. In the whole Trastevere, when I walked through it afterwards—in all that turbulent ultra-Roman quarter of Rome—I doubt if there were a soul in-doors. Were the men cursing in corners, and the terrified women trying to moderate them? The men were playing the favourite Roman game of "morra" in corners—the men were smoking and laughing—the men were making love to their sweet-hearts—the men went out of the way into the mud, at a place where a cardinal's carriage was standing as an obstacle on the drier ground, without a wry look or a savage word in any case. The women, in their Sunday best—the magnificent Roman women of the people—sat gossiping and nursing their children, as composedly as if they lived under the most constitutional monarchy in the world. If they had been English women, and had "known their blessings," they could not have looked more comfortable—nor, I will add (though it is treason in an Englishman to find any beauty out of his own country), could they have looked handsomer. Do you remember, when you were in Rome, devout female individuals stopping a cardinal out for his walk, to kiss the ring on his forefinger? I saw a devout female individual stop a cardinal, yesterday, for this extraordinary purpose, in a public thoroughfare. The cardinal took it as a matter of course, and the people took it as a matter of course, just as they did in your time.

Don't misunderstand me, in what I am now writing. I am not foolish enough to deny that there is discontent in Rome, because I don't find it coming to the surface. I don't for a moment doubt that there is serious and savage discontent—though I firmly believe it to be confined to the class (the special class, here and everywhere) which is capable of feeling a keen sense of wrong. More than this, I am even ready to believe that "the Roman committee" can raise a revolution, if it please, on the day when the French leave Rome. But granted the discontent, and granted the revolution, I am afraid there is a power here which will survive the one, and circumvent the other. I see the certainty of possessing that power in reserve in the unchanged attitude of the priests; and I see the foundation on which the conviction of the priests rests, in the unchanged attitude of the people. You know the old story of the man who had been so long in prison that he had lost all relish of liberty, and who, when they opened the doors for him at last, declined to come out. When you open the door here, I hope—but I confess I find it hard to believe—that you will find the Roman people ready to come out.

So much for the first and foremost of the chances in favour of the Pope; the chance that the immense religious influence at his command will prove too strong for you. Observe (before we get on) how boldly and openly he is meeting you with that influence already, on your own ground. You know that the form of Christianity of which he is the head, is the one form that

really adapts itself to the Italian temperament; and you leave the spiritual interests of the people at his sole disposal, while you take the material interests into your own hands. What does he do upon this? He declares, with the whole force of his authority and position, that his spiritual rights and his temporal rights are indivisible, and that respect for the one means respect for the other. View this declaration as a political assertion, and the absurdity of it is beneath notice. Pronounced by the Pope, it becomes an article of Faith. "You take your religion from Me," says His Holiness. "*That* is part of your religion." What is the answer to this from the life of the faithful—not in Rome only, but all over the civilised globe? The answer from hundreds of thousands of otherwise intelligent people, having their influence on public opinion, is—"Amen!"

The second of the chances in the Pope's favour; the present dearth of commanding ability in the civil and military administration of the Italian Kingdom; needs no discussion here, for it admits of no denial. To enlarge on this part of the subject, after the events of the late war, would be almost equivalent to reproaching Italy with her misfortunes. God forbid I should do that! May you yet find the men who can lead your brave army and your brave navy as they deserve to be led! May you yet find the men who can hold out to the discontented, disunited, degraded people of the southern provinces the hand strong enough to help them up, the hand that can rule! Here, at least, we may hope for Italy, with some assurance that we are not hoping in vain. The nation that produced Cavour, the nation that possesses Garibaldi, must surely have its reserves of strength still left.

If you were not a northern Italian, I should feel some difficulty in approaching the last of the three points of view from which I look at the Papal Obstacle standing in your way. Fortunately for my purpose, you are not a Tuscan or a Roman—for it is precisely in the radical defects of the Tuscan and the Roman characters that I see the last of the three chances which the weakness of Italy still offers to the cause of the Pope.

The two striking defects of your countrymen, so far as a stranger can see them, appear to me to be: first, their apparent incapability of believing in truth; secondly, their want of moral fibre and nerve in the smaller affairs of life. The first of these defects presents the Italian to me in the aspect of a man who cannot be persuaded that I am telling the truth about the simplest matter conceivable, so long as he sees under the surface an object which I *might* gain by telling a lie. The second of these defects shows me my Italian fellow-pilgrim along the road of life, in the character of a man who, whenever he finds a stone in his path, skirts lazily round it, and leaves it to the traveller behind him, instead of lifting his foot and kicking it, once for all, out of the way. These are both (to my mind) dangerous national failings. The first lowers the public standard of

honour, and does incalculable mischief in that way. The second leaves your countrymen without the invaluable check on all nuisances, abuses, and injustices, of a public opinion to discuss, and a public voice to resent them. There is gain, my friend, certain gain and certain strength here, for the cause of bad government all the world over.

Let me illustrate what I mean, by one or two examples, before I close my letter.

Not long ago, a certain mistake (the pure result of hurry and carelessness) was made in conducting the business of a certain English Legation. Some consternation was felt when the error was discovered, for it might have ended in awkward results. But the caprices of Chance are proverbial. An unforeseen turn of circumstance placed the Legation in the lucky position of having blundered, after all, in the right direction: a diplomatic advantage was thus accidentally gained, by a fortunate diplomatic error. A friend of mine (himself in the diplomatic service) was a few days afterwards in the company of several Italian gentlemen; all of them men of education and position; some of them men of note and mark in politics. On entering the room, my friend, to his astonishment, found himself eagerly surrounded, and complimented in the warmest terms on the extraordinary capacity of his Chief. It was almost a pleasure, your polite countrymen said, to be overreached in such an extremely clever manner. The Englishman, as soon as he could make himself heard, attempted to put the matter in its true light. It all originated, he declared, in a mistake. The Italians smiled, and shook their heads with the most charming courtesy and good humour. "Cave! cave!" they remonstrated. "You have outwitted us; but, my dear sir, we are not downright fools. The 'mistake' has done its work. You may drop the mistake!" The Englishman declared, on his word of honour, that the true explanation was the explanation he had given. The Italians bowed resignedly, and left him. To this day they are persuaded that the mistake was made on purpose. To this day they admire my friend as a master in the art of solemn false assertion for diplomatic ends.

This little incident is trivial enough in itself, I grant you; but pursue the inveterate belief in deceit that it exhibits, into the daily affairs of life, on the one hand, and into serious political emergencies on the other, and tell me if you do, or do not, see some of your domestic scandals and some of your ministerial complications under a new light.

Take your railroads again, as illustrating some of those other defects in the national character which I have ventured to point out. In Northern Italy, the railroad is excellently managed: in Northern Italy the railroad has taught the people the value of time. Advance through Tuscany, and go on to Rome, and I hardly know which would surprise and disgust you most—the absolute laziness of the official people in working the line, or the absolute sub-

mission of the passengers under the most inexcusable and the most unnecessary delays. I arrived at the capital of the kingdom of Italy by the train which they called an express. There were surprisingly few passengers, and there were only some six or eight barrow-loads of luggage. The porters—and there were quite enough of them—occupied half an hour, by my watch, in transporting the baggage from the van to the receiving-room. I never saw men lounge as those Florentine porters lounged; I never saw inspectors stand and do nothing, as those Florentine inspectors stood and did nothing; and I never saw travellers take the exasperating and disgraceful indolence of the people paid to serve them, as the Italian travellers took it. Two men protested—two men were angry. One was a Frenchman, the other was your obedient servant.

Going on once more towards Rome (but not yet, mind, out of the kingdom of Italy), we were kept waiting three-quarters of an hour for the arrival of a branch train. Three impatient men got out, and walked up and down the dominions of Victor Emmanuel, fuming. Again, the Frenchman; again, your obedient servant, and another Englishman. And what did the free Italians do? They sat talking and smoking in the sweetest of tempers. The perfect composure of the engine-driver, the stoker, and the guards, was more than matched by the perfect composure of the native passengers. Late or early, in the train or out of the train, oh *dolce far niente*, how nice you are, and how dearly we love you! See the Frenchman grinding his teeth, and hear the Englishmen with their national "Damn!" What a fever is in the blood of these northern people, and what lives the poor guards and engine-drivers must lead in those restless northern lands! Here comes the train, before the fourth quarter of an hour is out—what would you have more? Has any accident happened? Nothing has happened. We have somehow lost three-quarters of an hour on the road, to-day; you somehow lost an hour on the road yesterday. *Ma che?* After all, we are going on to Rome. We go on. Night and darkness overtake us. The train stops, without a vestige of a station or a lamp visible anywhere in the starlight. A lonely little maid, with a little basket, appears, drifting dimly along the line, and crying "Medlars! medlars! buy my medlars!" Have we stopped to give this poor child a chance of picking up some coppers? Send her this way directly; let us buy the whole basket-full, and give the little maid a kiss, and go on to Rome. My head is out of the window; my hand is in my pocket. A gendarme appears, and the little maid vanishes. "Be so obliging," the gendarme says, "as to come out and be fumigated." I tell him I have come from Florence; I tell him there is no cholera at Florence; I tell him I have got a clean bill of health from Florence. The gendarme waits till I have done, and replies, "Be so obliging as to come out and be fumigated." Everybody else has already got out to be fumigated. I hear the

Frenchman in the darkness; his language is not reproducible. First class, second class, third class, we grope our way, without artificial light of any sort to help us, up the side of a hill, and all tumble into a shed. A soldier closes the door on us; a white smoke rises from the floor, and curls feebly about the people who are near it. Human fustiness and chloride of lime contend for the mastery; human fustiness, if my nose be to be trusted, has the best of it. Half a minute (certainly not more) passes, and the door is suddenly opened again; we are all fumigated; we may go on to Rome. No, we may not. The passports must be examined next. In any other country in the world, one stoppage would have been made to serve the two purposes. In Italy, two stoppages take place. As we jog on again, I consult my official guide to find out when we are due in Rome. The guide says 9 p.m. An experienced traveller tells me the guide is wrong—the hour is 8 p.m. A second traveller produces another guide—the hour is so ill printed that nobody can read it. I appeal to a guard, when we stop at the next station. "In Heaven's name, when do we get to Rome?" In the gentlest possible manner he replies, "Have patience, sir." I catch the vice of patience from the guard, and it ends in our getting to Rome before midnight. Next morning I try to find out, in various well-informed quarters, whether there is a public opinion of any sort or kind to resent and reform such absurdities as I have here, in all good humour, tried to describe. I can find out no such thing as a public opinion. I can find out no such thing as the nerve and fibre out of which a public opinion is made. Abuses which have nothing to do with politics, abuses which are remediable even under the Pope himself, encounter no public condemnation and no public resistance. Is it wonderful that the King of Naples still persists in waiting for his turn of luck? Can you call the "Catholic party" absolutely demented, if the "Catholic party" believe that the cards may yet change hands?

My letter is ended. All that is to be written and said, on the other side of the question, has been written and said, over and over again, already. The ungracious task of finding out your faults, and of stopping to look for the pitfalls that lie in your way, is now, to the best of my ability and within my narrow limits, a task performed. For the rest, time will show how far I am right, and how far I am wrong.

Meanwhile, I beg you will not do me the injustice to suppose that I have lost hope in the future of Italy. I have said what I have ventured to say, because I believe in the sincere resolution of the best among you to rouse the worst among you, and to show them, if it lie in human power, the way to advancement and reform. A man who honestly tells another man of his faults has some hope in that man, or he would hold his tongue. Distrust the flatterers and the enthusiasts—see the difficulties still before you, as the difficulties really are. When your people have had their Venetian holiday, send them

mercilessly to school. For the future, let us have less throwing up of caps, and more throwing up of arable land—less illumination of houses, and more illumination of brains—the industry of an united people (which you have not got yet), in place of the acclamations of an united people (of which you have had more than enough). In plainer English still, do the work first, and shout over it afterwards. On the day when Italy has learnt that lesson, you will be too strong for the Pope, and you will be a free people.

M.D.

Is it better for the interests of both sexes, and for their wholesome influence in this world of ours—is it better, after all, that Eve should of right assume the letters M.D. as signifying My Dear, or My Doctor?

A lady dressed in a short black silk tunic, reaching a little below the knees, the skirts falling close to the figure like those of a man's frock-coat, wearing, moreover, a pair of black cloth trousers, and having flowers in her hair, presents an appearance which is likely to be regarded by the benighted inhabitants of this country with something of astonishment, and something also of disapproval. Yet on a certain evening in November, in this year 1866, the American lady physician, Dr. Mary E. Walker, had the courage to stand upon a platform in the great St. James's Hall, dressed in such costume, and to deliver a lecture to an exceedingly large, and, for the most part—I am sorry to say—an exceedingly ill-behaved, audience.

Those who read the newspapers know already something about this lecture. It was to be, said the advertisements, an account of the experiences which this lady had passed through; first, when a student at the Medical Lyceum; secondly, when engaged in private practice as an ordinary physician; thirdly, during her attendance on sick and wounded soldiers engaged in the late American war. The public already knows how this lecture—partly an autobiographical narrative, partly a statement of very advanced opinions on the threadbare subject of woman's mission—was received. A large section of the audience came to the St. James's Hall, not to listen, not to judge, but to condemn, and that in a very rude and shocking manner.

It is not to be concealed that there was plenty for the large section to condemn, only they need not have done it brutally. There was much to condemn, much to laugh at, much to deplore, and something withal to admire. It was impossible not to condemn the egotism and vanity constantly displayed as the lecturer went on; impossible not to laugh at the verbal and other absurdities by which the lecture was continually disfigured; impossible not to deplore the perversion of rare zeal and unflagging energy whose existence was indicated throughout the whole narration; equally impossible to withhold one's admiration from the courage, the

perseverance, and the self-denial, which had enabled this lady to go through so much that was tiresome and revolting to a woman's nature: not forgetting what she had to undergo on this very occasion, the first night of her appearing before a London audience.

Many persons know through actual experience, and many more by means of what they have read, something of the exceedingly florid nature of American oratory. In this respect our learned doctor was very strong. "I had no Pillar of Fire to light me, no Jacob's Ladder by which to climb to my object, no THAMES TUNNEL TO PASS UNDER, NO ATLANTIC CABLE TO GO THROUGH." She had been speaking of the difficulties she had had to encounter in the course of her enterprise, and of the small means of helping herself she had had at her disposal. This tremendous sentence came quite at the beginning of the lecture, and there was another near the end, which was, perhaps, equally flowery and equally intelligible. "If," said the lecturer, with one hand raised on high, "if we could look into the Future with the telescope of Faith, and read upon its walls, inscribed in golden letters, the issue of our endeavours—who would not?"—the rest escaped me. For, I was making a note of the extraordinary words I had just heard, and what the "who" at the end of the above sentence would do, or would not do, when he found himself with the "Telescope of Faith" at his eye, and the writing on the "walls of the Future" exposed to his gaze, must, I fear, remain unexplained.

"How I did wish that I could wear a short dress!" said Dr. Walker, in the course of a retrospective view of her medical career at the Lyceum, where she took her degree. And this fervent aspiration was continually repeated as she advanced from stage to stage in her professional course. The long skirts were for ever in her way. How could she operate, how dissect, how whisk in and out of the inevitable brougham, and rush off round the corner to a patient in a hurry, with a crinoline and a train for ever impeding the freedom of her movements? When she was a little girl, under fourteen years of age, she wore short petticoats, and was happy. Men wore no petticoats at all, and were happy. Dr. Walker was very strong indeed upon this petticoat question. She said in so many words: "Long dresses are killing women;" she did not say how; but she asserted the fact, and a chilling silence followed the remark. Perhaps the different members of the audience were speculating as to how the extra breadth did their full work, and in what manner the coup de grace was finally inflicted. Perhaps they were summing up in their minds the number of octogenarian spinsters of their acquaintance, on whom the noxious influences of voluminous drapery had failed hitherto to take effect. There seemed to be a general feeling that some explanation was desirable, but none was forthcoming. The lecturer was busy with the practical side of her subject. She discoursed on the various lengths, or rather shortnesses, of

skirt which were reconcilable with the principles of physiology and hygiene, and went into many abstruse speculations as to the fitness or unfitness of white pantalettes for female medical wear. She had favoured them strongly at one time, she said; but had been obliged finally to abandon them on account of the mud. Her present costume was so convenient and so easily managed, that, during her professional career, sick people would frequently send for her at night, rather than for a male practitioner, because "she could get ready so much quicker."

The superior advantage enjoyed by men in all matters connected with costume seemed to rankle a little in the bosom of our learned lady. She was continually instituting comparisons between the two sexes, in connexion with this part of her subject. "Men do not look horrible," she said, "because they don't wear stays and petticoats." And again: "Men have not one corner of their brains always occupied with the skirt of a dress." According to Dr. Walker's theory, that part of a lady's dress which is below the knee is for ever on her mind. Be the circumstances by which she is surrounded what they may, she has always one eye fixed on this particular portion of her costume, watching lest some unknown ill should befall it. It is a painful reflection this, and pleads trumpet-tongued for the general adoption of Bloomerism. Let the reader—the young reader especially—bear this revelation of the doctor's in mind. When he makes an offer of his hand and heart to the beloved object, and observes upon her countenance an expression of perplexity, which he naturally connects with the words he has just uttered, let him conclude that it is the consciousness of something wrong with that lower skirt, by which the maiden is agitated. Her lover's muddy boot is no doubt trampling upon her new poplin—and she knows it. "Anything she had succeeded in doing," said the doctor, winding up this section of her subject, "she had been able to do through having worn short dresses;" and, indeed, these mutilated skirts, and their numerous advantages, were introduced continually throughout the lecture, à propos of anything—sometimes, of nothing.

It was curious to observe that, with all her strength of mind, this lady had not been above making some concessions to that decorative instinct which is supposed to spring for ever in the female breast. Those shortened skirts, of which so much has been said, were decorated with velvet trimming: a sort of sash constructed of broad black ribbon was fastened in a large bow at the lady's back. She wore, moreover, a lace collar and white kid gloves, and—greatest concession of all—had a wreath of flowers in her hair.

The doctor had a curious sudden way of coming out with certain remarks, which always seemed to set her hearers laughing. One aphorism spoken in this manner, "Long dresses are killing women," has already been mentioned, but not the abrupt manner in which the words

were brought out, and which had something indescribably odd about it. The audience, however, were most amused when the doctor, taking advantage of a dead pause—one of the few moments of quiet accorded to her by that very noisy company—remarked in a calm clear tone: "I have frequently extracted teeth."

"You lose all the beauty of this lecture," said the doctor, irritated by the frequent interruptions to which she was subjected, "when you only allow me to say one or two words at a time; it is quite impossible but that the effect of what I have to say must be lost." In one way or other, our physician managed to say a good many things which indicated a high appreciation of her own qualities. She told us that she had a decided look, as indeed she had, and that her father went with her to the university to start her there, well knowing that she would certainly carry through, the thing she had once begun. She mentioned, moreover, that such was her influence among the soldiery, and such their opinion of *her* opinion, that the wounded (wounded) men would never submit to amputation until she had pronounced it to be indispensable. It was while dwelling upon this part of her subject that the unfortunate anecdote about the dying man who extended his arms towards her, and implored her "to kiss him twice," came to be related. A story partly absurd, partly terrible, but certainly teaching the very plain lesson to every one who hears it, that, whatever may be said for or against the fitness of women to act medically in cases where women and children are concerned, their being of use to men in this way is a thing entirely out of the question. Dr. Mary Walker—to do her justice—seemed herself to see this part of the subject in its true light, always giving herself out as a physician for women and children only.

Altogether, it does not seem as if the vexed question whether women are fit or unfit for such occupations as doctoring, and the like, was brought nearer to a solution by such a lecture as this. Looking in a philosophical spirit upon this exhibition at the St. James's Hall, it was impossible to resist an ever-recurring conviction that, whatever might be the real mission of women, whatever might be the right view or the wrong view of their business upon the earth, this, at least, that we had come to see, was all wrong from beginning to end. No one could look at that figure standing at the reading-desk, dressed in those unbecoming and ungraceful garments, and fail to perceive that *that* was wrong. Whatever view of a woman's legitimate function in the world, involved such a mistake as that, was unquestionably a wrong view. There was, clearly, one outrageous error in judgment here; and it was difficult to resist the conclusion that it was not a solitary one. That slight frail woman fighting, with her weak voice, against the common sense and verdict of mankind, was fearfully eloquent in pleading against herself. It did not look right, somehow, that the weak lady should be so com-

bative, and have her hand against all the world. It seemed, too, always to have been so. In her own country, where she had first announced her intention of entering upon a medical course, she had met with nothing but opposition from her own country-people. The professors said that they should feel a certain awkwardness in delivering their anatomical and other medical lectures in the presence of a lady; while, of the students, some threatened to abandon the school if she remained in it, and others asked, with more bluntness than courtesy: "What business ladies had in Lyceums?" (The doctor mentioned this fact quite frankly to her audience, to their great and unequivocal delight.)

Always fighting, always with the world against her! When she adopted that peculiar dress, the women were her opponents, as the men had been in the Lyceum school. She had set the men against her by her first exploit—a thing not often done by a woman; and by her next, she had awakened the animosity and disapproval of her own sex, and had come to number its members also among her heartiest opponents. A miserable and unnatural life this lady's, surely! For though we are most of us ready to admit that it may fall to the lot of a *man*, through no fault of his own, to go through the world always with the harness on his back and the sword in his hand, yet do we all feel that such a life would be most terrible and unseemly for a *woman* to lead.

This was a painful exhibition, then, from beginning to end. Painful—whether one was occupied in considering the position of the lady who played "the part" of the evening, or in studying the behaviour of the audience which had been brought to visit St. James's Hall on this occasion, by the rumour of something new under the sun at last. It is so much the custom in this country, just now, to be exceedingly lenient in speaking of those forms of ill behaviour which are common among us—even the outrageous and intolerable class called "roughs" being spoken of with a strange toleration—that one is scarcely surprised to find, in some of the published accounts of the first appearance of this American lady, the positive ferocity of a certain portion of the audience, described as "good humour." It was surely the strangest good humour ever seen. If to hoot and howl at a perfectly defenceless person, condemning her unheard, according to her much such a reception as we give to our more atrocious criminals on their way to the police-court—if this be looked upon as an evidence of good humour, it becomes a curious speculation what sort of thing the *ill* humour of an audience may be.

The persons who filled the gallery at the end of the room, had evidently come there, in vulgar parlance, for a "lark." But they would have done better to remember that it was a lark at a woman's expense. As she stood alone in the vast assembly, one could not help feeling that there was a mute appeal in her weakness and helplessness which made the determined opposition with which she was met by her relentless

persecutors, and which resounded noisily through the whole building before she appeared, emphatically—a Shame!

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE MURDER OF MR. WILLIAM WEARE, OF LYON'S INN.

ABOUT half-past one o'clock on Friday, the 24th of October, 1823, Mr. William Weare—a not very reputable attorney, bill-discounter, and gambler; in person, a little dressy, dark, flashy man, with high cheek-bones, and whiskers growing towards the corners of his mouth, who had chambers at No. 2, Lyon's Inn, second floor—took a hasty dinner preliminary to going down on a little shooting-excursion for three days with his notorious friend, Mr. John Thurtell, well known at Epsom and in the betting ring, to a lonely cottage about fourteen miles from London, on the St. Alban's-road.

Having packed up in a carpet-bag five shirts, six pair of socks, a shooting-jacket, with a whistle at the button-hole, leggings, a pair of breeches, a pair of laced-up boots, a pair of Wellington boots, and a baggammon-board to amuse himself with a quiet game after the day's shooting, he put his double-barrelled gun in its woollen case, and got down his double-caped box coat from its nail ready for a start. Then slipping easily on a new olive-coloured coat and a buff waistcoat, he re-tied his plaid handkerchief, threw his long double-gold chain round his neck, put on his diamond ring, and deposited his gold hunter's watch in the pocket of his buff waistcoat, with a steel chain to still further secure it, placed his old companion, an ivory-handled penknife, in his other pocket, slid a pad of bank-notes, with an old gambler's cautiousness, into a secret pocket in his flannel waistcoat, shook out a clean yellow silk handkerchief, then rang the bell for his laundress, Mary Maloney, to fetch a hackney-coach for him from the Strand, at the Spotted Dog. The coach came about three o'clock to the end of Holywell-street, Mr. Weare slamming the door of No. 2 behind him, came out first, carrying the gun. The laundress followed with the bag, and off drove the coach to the corner of St. Martin's-lane, where the fare alighted and paid a visit in Spring-gardens. Finally he alighted at the corner of Cumberland-street and the New-road.

In the mean time, Mr. Joseph Hunt, a public singer of bad reputation, had been about three o'clock to the White Lion Inn, in the yard of the Golden Cross, Charing-cross, and hired an iron-grey horse, with a blaze on his face, and white legs. A dark green gig was obtained from Mr. Cross, in Whitcomb-street. About five o'clock he drove to the Coach and Horses, 16, Conduit-street, and Mr. Thurtell, who lodged there, got in and drove off alone, Hunt having first carefully put under the seat a large sack which he had that morning bought in St. Giles's, probably for putting game into. At Padding-

ton-turnpike, Thurtell picked up a companion, at a little past five o'clock.

About twenty minutes before seven, Thomas Wilson, one of the mounted horse-police, on his way towards London, at the top of Harp Hill, near Edgeware, met two gentlemen in drab great-coats, driving a grey horse with a white face furiously, and on the wrong side of the road. When they came near him, he shouted, "Bow-street patrol," and asked them why they drove at such a rate. One of them answered, "Good night, patrol," and drove on.

A quarter of an hour later, Thurtell and his friend stopped at the White Lion, Edgeware; giving their horse a feed, and themselves some grog. Clarke, the landlord, who knew Thurtell well, was driving home with his wife in a taxed cart from King's Langley, and met the gig near the ninth milestone. Thurtell was shouting at the time, "Yaep, yaep," to a stage-coach with lights, which was in the middle of the road, and he had to pass it on the wrong side. Clarke recognised his voice. There was a bag in the front of the gig.

The landlord had scarcely reached his house before he heard some one calling in the road, and found another horse and gig which he knew as belonging to Probert, a spirit merchant, of infamous character and a fraudulent bankrupt, who lived at the cottage to which Thurtell and his friend were bound. Probert and Hunt were in it. While they were drinking a glass of brandy-and-water, Clarke said to them as he stood by the gig:

"This matter of Thurtell, I think, will turn out a bad business;"—alluding to a charge against Thurtell and his brother Thomas for defrauding the County Fire Office of one thousand nine hundred pounds by burning down a silk warehouse, to avoid which charge they were then in hiding at the Coach and Horses, in Conduit-street.

"Oh no," said Hunt; "it's all nonsense. Here, look at this."

He then took out a newspaper and a letter from Thomas Thurtell, and gave them to the publican to read. While Clarke was reading, Hunt jumped out of the gig, came into the bar, and he and Probert took another glass of brandy-and-water. They then drove off.

About eight o'clock, Mrs. Smith, a farmer's wife and child, and Elizabeth Osborne, a labourer's wife, their nurse, were driving home in a donkey-chaise (the farmer himself walking) down a lane which leads from Batler's Green to the high road between High Cross and Radlet. The moon had not yet risen, and the country people were chattering pleasantly about the drive and the visit they had just made, when Elizabeth Osborne suddenly cried out:

"God bless me, that's a gun gone off, is it not?"

Mr. Smith said, "Yes; stop the chaise!"

They all listened. To their horror, there came through the darkness across the field from Gill's Hill-lane deep groans, as if some one had met with an accident. The good-natured farmer said:

"I will run across and see; it is somewhere near Philip my brother's turnip-field gate."

"Pray don't," said the alarmed wife. "Don't go; perhaps they will shoot you."

"Pooh!" said the farmer; "if any one has shot a person, he is gone before now."

Just then, as they still listened, they heard several voices and a gig or cart move, and Mrs. Osborne said to the farmer's wife:

"Thank God, there is some one coming to his assistance, for I can hear talking. The man is not dead. His groans get further off. I think he is walking."

The gig, or cart, as they thought, then seemed to go on towards Gill's Hill. They still stopped listening, but heard no more groans; as they drove on, Mrs. Smith said:

"It is a very odd thing a gun going off." Her husband, dismissing the affair from his easy-going mind, remarked:

"I dare say it is some of those Gill's Hill people. They're sky-larking to frighten people."

The moon was just rising when the party got to Mr. Smith's at a little past eight, brightening peacefully over the trees and hedgerows, yellow and thinned by autumn.

About a quarter before eight, James Addis, the (boy) groom at Mr. Probert's cottage, hearing the wheels of a gig, ran out, thinking it was his master, but found that it was only something that had driven by very fast towards Batler's Green. About the same time, James Freeman, a labourer, living near Probert's, going to Gill's Hill-lane to meet his wife and bring her home, saw two gentlemen in a gig beyond Probert's. The moon was not then up, but it was starlight. At an elbow of the lane, one of the gentlemen, in a light, long great-coat (probably Thurtell), got out, and Freeman spoke to him about his horse being so distressed. He was fumbling in his breast-pocket, but he made no answer.

Near nine o'clock there came a sharp ring at the Gill's Hill Cottage, and Addis, going out, found Mr. John Thurtell there *alone*, standing at his horse's head, which was turned towards London. He told Addis to take the horse and gig in, but to touch nothing, while he went to meet Mr. Probert. While Addis was rubbing the horse down, Thurtell returned, and asked if he had attended to the horse. There was a carpet-bag in the gig, and a gun stuck in the folds of the leather apron. In about three-quarters of an hour Probert and Hunt arrived, with Thurtell hanging on behind.

Mrs. Probert and her sister, Miss Noyes, came down-stairs to welcome the visitors. Mr. Hunt, being a stranger, was formally introduced to the ladies. Probert having brought a loin of pork from London, some of the chops were cooked for supper. While these were getting ready, Probert told the ladies that they were going out to Mr. Nicholl's, a neighbouring farmer and road-surveyor, to get leave for a day's shooting. They returned about eleven to supper, Hunt and Probert eating heartily, but Thurtell, when the chops cut red and underdone, seemed to have lost his appetite, and said that he felt unwell. After supper, when the spirits and water

were produced, Hunt sang several songs, and Thurtell produced a richly chased gold hunting-watch, and, taking off the chain, said it was more fit for a lady, and offered it to Probert for his wife. Probert declining it, Thurtell put it round the lady's neck with his own hands. The ladies retired between twelve and one. The sleeping accommodation was limited, as Thurtell's nieces were staying in the house; so that Hunt arranged to sleep on the sofa, and Thurtell on some chairs.

In the course of the evening, Thurtell had asked Addis, the groom, for a pail of water, and had sponged some spots out of the collar of his coat. He had also been into the kitchen, and, with a knife, cut off the chain from his watch.

Several other still more singular occurrences took place that October night. Mrs. Probert felt suspicious of the visitors, and alarmed at their ways and mysterious snatches of talk. A vague and horrid alarm and fear filled her mind. When Mrs. Probert retired to bed, soon after twelve, and Miss Noyes had closed her door, she stole to the head of the stairs, and leaned cautiously over the banisters to listen. The talk in the parlour was in a whisper, growing louder and more audible at intervals. Her husband and the unexpected visitors were in conversation. One said: "I think that will fit you very well," as if trying on clothes. There was then a noise of papers rustling on the table, and the crunching of paper thrown into the fire.

Hunt said: "Let us take five pounds each."

Another voice then said: "We had a hare made us a present of coming along; it was thrown up in the gig on the cushion. We must tell that to the boy in the morning."

Another voice said: "We had better be off to town by four or five o'clock in the morning."

John Thurtell replied: "We had better not go before eight or nine o'clock, the usual time."

After a pause, Thurtell remarked: "What is the matter, Probert? you seem down in the mouth; your wife is a-bed and asleep hours ago. There is no one who has heard or seen anything this night; indeed, we must not split."

The frightened woman then stole back up into her room, closed the door, and waited for further sounds. A few minutes afterwards the glass doors of the parlour opened, and two of the men went to the stable with a light. Hunt held the light, and another brought the horse. Then they opened the yard gate, and let the horse out. Some time after this, Mrs. Probert, looking out of her dressing-room window, heard a noise in a walk called "The Dark Walk," from the shrubs that hemmed it in, and saw (it being a fine moonlight night) a short man dragging something large and heavy in a sack out of the Dark Walk towards the pond. There was a hollow sound, like a heap of stones thrown into a pit.

When Probert came to bed, about two o'clock, he found, to his sorrow, his wife sitting still undressed and crying. He said: "Why, I thought you were in bed."

She said to him: "Good God! what have you been about? What have I seen to-night?"

What have you been doing—you three? You have been counting money, burning papers, and dragging something heavy along the garden."

Probert replied:

"Don't make yourself uneasy, Betsy; you have only seen the netting; we have been trying to get some game, but there were five gamekeepers out."

Why was the horse let out of the stable? Oh, only to carry the netting.

Early on Saturday morning, two labourers, named Hunt and Herrington, were repairing Gill's Hill-lane, for Mr. Nicholls, of Batler's Green, the surveyor of the highway. It was a bright crystalline October morning, the yellow leaves drifting gently and silently down on the narrow lane and the wiry hedges, as the men plied pick and spade, and plastered and tossed up the mire from the deep wheel-ruts, where the leaves had gathered; on the half-dry road the black leaves were printed by nature's printing, and the cold dew stood in thick drops on the coarse roadside grass. Two gentlemen passed them on foot; one was a short man of a dark complexion, and with large black whiskers, the other taller, dressed in a dark coat and a white hat. One of the men remembered having seen the short dark man down there before during the summer. They were a queer suspicious lot of London chaps, a drinking, noisy, gambling lot, at Gill's Hill Cottage, they knew, coming down at suspicious times and leaving in a suspicious way, so the two men, looking up sullenly from their work, eyed them with curiosity and distrust. They passed without speaking, and about ten poles' distance from the labourers stopped at the side of the left-hand hedge at the bend of the lane, and stooped down "grabbling," as if for something they had lost, among the rustling leaves and half-stripped brambles. They then walked a little further, and came back to where Hunt was busy with his spade. "Good morning, sir," said Hunt to the taller man in the bruised white hat.

"You are going to widen this lane, are you not?" said the tall man.

Hunt replied, "I am going to try and widen it where I can, but I am going to trim it up all through."

The tall man said, "It is a d— nasty place, it is as dark as the grave. As I was coming up here last evening, I was capsized out of my gig."

"Did you hurt yourself, sir?"

"No, but I lost a silk handkerchief and a small penknife. I have found them both. I didn't hurt myself or my horse?"

"Was the gig broken?"

"No, the gig did not fall over, nor did the horse fall."

"That is a very queer thing to me, sir, that you should be capsized and your gig not fall."

The two gentlemen then went up the lane towards the cottage, leaving the labourers to their speculations on gig accidents and the queer lot at Probert's.

When the men were at breakfast some time afterwards, Herrington took his bread and

cheese in his hand, and strolled to the spot where the two gentlemen had been looking. Brushing the leaves away, he found a small penknife with the blade open and covered with blood; a little further on, a pistol with hair sticking to it, the pan down, and bloody; and on the leaves were spots and gouts of blood. About ten o'clock Mr. Nicholls, the surveyor, came round to see the men's work, and Herington gave him the pistol and knife. About noon the two gentlemen from Probert's drove down the lane again in a gig with an iron-grey horse. The tall man drove; it was the only gig that passed that day. They both looked hard at the spot near the maple-tree where the knife and pistol had been found, but said nothing.

That morning, when Probert got up, his wife renewed her inquiries about the scenes of the night before. He only replied:

"Don't torment me; you make my life miserable." He seemed in low spirits all day, went moping round the garden and about the pond; then took his double-barrelled gun and went out shooting. Bullmer, the gardener, thought his master that day very "downy," as he was generally a very cheerful gentleman. Before he went out with his gun, he asked the gardener if he were not ready for his dinner, and told him it was two o'clock, as if anxious to get him away.

At half-past four that afternoon, Probert, with his gun and pointer, came over the hedge and across the field near Shenley Hill, to John Silver, landlord of the Black Lion public-house, who was turning a dunghheap. Silver saw he was low, and seemed to have something on his mind, and said to him:

"What the devil is the matter with you, Probert?"

Probert said:

"I have had a long walk, shooting, and I have had no sport. You had better come in and make some brandy-and-water, and let me have a crust of bread and cheese, and perhaps I shall be better." As Probert ate and drank, he fetched one or two heavy sighs.

That same morning, before Thurtell and Hunt left Gill's Hill, Mrs. Probert had observed the gig cushions drying at the kitchen fire, although there had been no rain the day before. She remarked upon this to her husband, but he ridiculed her for her nonsensical fears. Soon afterwards the cook, going into the stable, was surprised to see a wet ripped-up sack hanging on a nail.

On the Saturday, John Thurtell and Hunt dined with Thomas Thurtell and Mr. Noyes, Probert's brother-in-law, at the Coach and Horses, in Conduit-street. Hunt asked Thomas Thurtell, in a bragging way, to his surprise, if he wanted change for fifty pounds? He was in high spirits about his money, said he had been shooting game, and that Probert held the bag. On being questioned as to what they had been doing, Hunt said laughingly:

"We Turpin lads can do the trick. We have been committing bloody murder, to be sure."

John Thurtell was in very good spirits. His brother, observing his hands scratched and cut, asked the reason. To which John Thurtell replied:

"Oh, Hunt, Probert, and I were out netting partridges last night, and the bushes tore my hands."

After dinner, John Thurtell, pulling out a gold watch, his brother asked him where he got it? John replied that was no business of his.

Hunt said:

"What Turpin lads we are, John! Let's have a bottle of wine. I can't drink anything else now. My old woman (wife) was in a fine rage last night because I stayed out all night; but she was pleased when I pulled out the money, and ordered two fowls and some pickled pork."

On Sunday morning, Thomas Thurtell walked out on the Kilburn-road, on his way to Mr. Probert's, to see his little girls. Before he got to Kilburn, John Thurtell and Hunt came by in a gig, and took him up. About a mile from Edgeware they overtook Mr. Noyes. John Thurtell then got out and walked with him, and Hunt and Thomas Thurtell drove on to Probert's. As they drove past the garden fence, Hunt took out a new spade, which lay at the bottom of the gig half covered with a coat, and threw it over the garden hedge. On being asked why he did not take it round to the yard, Hunt replied: "Don't you think I know what I am after? Probert don't want his wife to know he is extravagant." They brought down in the gig with the spade a piece of beef and two bottles of rum.

On the Sunday, after walking in the garden and dining (Probert, it was noticed, had no appetite), cards were produced, and the two Thurtells, Hunt, and Noyes sat down to whist, while Probert went to see Mr. Nicholls, the road-surveyor, at Batler's Green, about letting his cottage. The game was, however, never played out; for John Thurtell said the cards ran cross, and threw up his hand.

At six o'clock on the Sunday evening, Mr. Howard, of 68, Hatton-garden, proprietor of the Gill's Hill Cottage, called there by appointment, and went with Probert to Mr. Nicholls.

Nicholls said at once to Probert:

"By-the-by, Probert, what the deuce was going on down your lane the other night? I suppose some of your people got groggy, and one of them got behind a hedge and fired off a gun to alarm the rest. I have done so myself in my younger days."

Probert replied he had not heard the report, and did not know anything about it. Some one then saying that Mr. Barker, who had just bought the place of Major Wood, intended to fill up the fish-pond (Probert seemed much interested at this), Mr. Howard said:

"They had better drag the pond, as there is a large quantity of fish in it, that I put in myself three years ago. Some of them weigh a pound each."

Smith, the farmer, who was present, then stated (Mr. Nicholls listening very attentively),

what he, his wife, and Elizabeth Osborne had heard in Gill's Hill-lane on the previous Friday evening. The conversation then dropped.

The next day, early, Mr. Nicholls, the road-surveyor, went to Watford, to the magistrates then sitting at the Essex Arms Inn, and told them the story of the pistol and knife, which he brought with him. They instantly sent the pistol to Bow-street, and requested an active officer to be sent down. Two magistrates at once proceeded to Mr. Nicholls's house, stopping in the lane by the way to see the spot where the pistol had been found. They discovered pools of blood under the leaves in a wheel-rut and a gap in the bank and hedge, where a body seemed to have been dragged through into the ploughed field adjoining. There was human hair sticking and tangled in the lower boughs and hedge-stakes, and on the field side of the hedge there seemed to have been much trampling. "There has been a murder here," said the magistrate at once, as he looked up with a pale face. Finding that Probert was to leave the next day, and that a caravan loaded with goods was even then in his yard, the magistrates and constables instantly went to Gill's Hill, took Probert and Thomas Thurtell into custody, and searched the house and premises. The others had gone to London.

Thurtell was apprehended at the Coach and Horses, in Conduit-street. His coat, waistcoat, shirt, and hat were stained with blood. At Hunt's lodgings there had been found a shooting-jacket, a backgammon-board, a double-barrelled Manton, and a carpet-bag containing several shirts marked W.; the stable-boy from Gill's Hill Cottage also deposed to having found a shirt of Mr. Weare's under a heap of dung in Probert's stable. Rexworthy, a billiard-table keeper in Spring-gardens, proved that on Thursday, the 22nd of October, John Thurtell came in and spoke to Weare at his house, and that when Thurtell left, Mr. Weare informed witness that he was going down to Hertfordshire on Friday for a few days' shooting with Thurtell, and that on Friday Mr. Weare called about three, and told him he was on his way to meet Thurtell in the Edgeware-road. Thurtell, being questioned by the officers, said he knew Mr. Weare, but had not seen him for eight days. He had not met him on Friday in the Edgeware-road. The pistol which was found in his pocket he had picked up on Sunday at Gill's Hill.

Mr. Noel, a solicitor generally employed in gambling-house cases, being present at the police-office, said to Thurtell: "You tell us you found this pistol near Probert's; what will you say when I tell you I can produce the fellow to it found within a few yards of the same spot?"

Thurtell replied: "I know nothing about that." But his countenance changed in a ghastly way.

Mr. Noel: I can tell you, Thurtell, that Mr. Weare is not to be found.

Thurtell: I am sorry for it, but I know nothing about him.

Mr. Noel then said to Hunt, in private:

"Mr. Hunt, for God's sake tell the magis-

trates whatever you know of this murder, and in all probability you will be admitted as evidence. It is clear that Mr. Weare has been murdered, we only want to find where the body is; if you know, for God's sake tell us."

Hunt several times denied all knowledge of the transaction, and resisted every importunity, in spite of the magistrates warning him to consider his perilous situation. He then was taken into another room with Mr. Noel and Ruthven and Upson, the Bow-street officers. He still remained firm. Upson then said:

"Hunt, you have a mother?"

"Yes, I have."

"And a wife also?"

"Yes."

"And you love them dearly?"

"Yes, very dearly."

"Then don't risk hanging, but tell where the body is, before Probert and the other peach, and it is too late." Hunt then consented to become a witness, and said he could point out the place where the body was. Mr. Noel struck his hand on the table, and, shaking Hunt's hand, said:

"That's all we want. Hunt, I am very glad you have saved your own life."

He was then taken to the magistrates, asked to sit down, and was given some brandy-and-water.

At nine o'clock four men went with Hunt in a hackney-coach to find the body. Hunt remembered the place by a bridge on the Elstree road. It was in a deep slough on the right-hand side going from Elstree to Radlet, and two miles from Gill's Hill. The body was found in the centre of the pond, where the water was four feet deep. It must have been swung in by two men. It was naked, the head and body in a sack, with flints under each armpit, and a handkerchief full of stones tied to the cord that fastened the sack. The jaw and left temple were driven in, as if with a pistol-muzzle. There was a shot-wound in the right cheek-bone, there were two deep cuts half through the jugular vein on the left side of the neck, behind the ear, and there was another wound on the right side. There was a red handkerchief tied round the neck of the corpse, as if intended to stanch the blood. Hunt would not look at the body. Probert said: "I never saw that corpse before. I declare to God I never did. You may rely upon it, I never saw that unhappy man before."

Hunt's confession to the magistrates was a conglomerate of lies and truth. He said that Thurtell told him that Weare and a man named Lemon had robbed him, with false cards, of three hundred pounds at blind-hookey. "Sooner or later," said Thurtell to Hunt, "I will be revenged." On the Friday he took a walk with Thurtell, and bought a pair of pocket-pistols. On his way down with Probert he had eight glasses of brandy-and-water, five at the Artichoke at Elstree. On arriving at Gill's Hill, Thurtell took them into the garden, and said: "I have settled that beggar that robbed me of three hundred pounds. I've blown his brains out, and he's behind a hedge in the lane."

Here the language of the confession becomes too absurdly unnatural to be true:—

"'Nonsense,' was," Hunt said, "Probert's reply, 'nonsense. You have never been guilty of a thing of that kind, John Thurtell? If you have, and near my cottage, my character and my family are ruined for ever. But I cannot believe you have been guilty of so rash an act. Here, Hunt, take in that loin of pork, and desire the cook to get it dressed immediately.'" By-and-by they drank a glass of brandy, and ate two pork chops each. About four o'clock in the morning, Hunt continued, Thurtell went with the horse, and dragged the body into the horse-pond.

Thurtell, Probert, and Hunt, were arraigned at Hertford, December 4, before Mr. Justice Park and Mr. Justice Holroyd. Thurtell, who was the son of the Mayor of Norwich, and of respectable connexions, appeared at the bar dressed in a plum-coloured frock-coat, white neckcloth, a drab waistcoat with gilt buttons, and white corded breeches. He had a fierce Satanic face, long upper lip, a bony knotted forehead, and deeply buried eyes. His mouth was sensual, sullen, and dogged. His right eyebrow was nearly straight, while the left rose in a high pointed arch. His frame was athletic and powerful, and he had a peculiar stoop in his shoulders. Hunt, small, sallow, with unmeaning eyes, and hair foppishly disordered to express grief, was dressed in black, with a white cravat. Probert was a coarse unwieldy man, with a receding forehead, grizzled black hair, small head and legs, blubber lips, eyes like those of "a vicious horse," and a deceitful, thievish expression.

Probert was admitted king's evidence, told a much more natural story than Hunt, and revealed more details of the horrible and coldly premeditated crime. On the Thursday when he met Thurtell, the prisoner asked him for five pounds, and told him, if he did not get it, he should be three hundred pounds out of pocket. He was going down to Gill's Hill, if a certain friend met him at the Paddington-gate at five, and said: "If I have an opportunity, I mean to do him, for he is a man that has robbed me of several hundreds. I have told Hunt where to stop. I shall want him about a mile and a half beyond Elstree. If you don't go, give Hunt a pound." On their way down, at about four miles from London, he and Hunt passed Thurtell. Hunt said: "It's all right, Jack has got him; there they are; drive by, and take no notice." At Elstree they stopped three-quarters of an hour, waiting for Thurtell, but somehow or other he had passed them without their knowing it, before reaching Edgeware. Beyond Elstree, Hunt got out and waited for Thurtell. When Probert met Thurtell on the road, he asked for Hunt, but said:

"Oh, I don't want him now. I've done the trick. I've killed the man I brought down, and rid the country of a villain."

When they went to look for the body, Thurtell kicked about the leaves to find the pistol and knife, but without success. He (Probert) then

promised to look for them in the morning; the body was lying with the lead in a shawl. Thurtell searched the pockets, and took out a pocket-book with fifteen pounds in notes, a memorandum-book, and some silver; a purse of sovereigns and a watch he had before removed, he said, when he killed him. They then put the body head-foremost in a sack, and tied it round the knees. Then continued Probert,

Thurtell said: "When I first shot him, he jumped out of the gig and ran like the devil, singing out that he would pay back all he had won of me if I would only spare his life. I jumped out of the gig and ran after him. I got him down, and began to cut his throat, as I thought, close to the jugular vein; but I could not stop his singing out. I then jammed the pistol into his head, and gave it a turn round; then I knew I had done him. (Turning to Hunt) Joe, you ought to have been with me, for I thought at one time he would have got the better of me." Thurtell said that, but for Hunt's mistake, they should have killed Weare in the other lane, and then have gone to London and inquired of his friends why he had not kept his appointment. Thurtell and Hunt went out to bring the body, but found it too heavy, and left it. He (Probert) and Thurtell then went and brought the body on the horse, and put it in the pond with some stones in the sack. On Sunday, Hunt put on the clothes of deceased, and Thurtell walked to the pond, asked if the body had risen, and said it would lie there safe for months.

On his return from Mr. Nicholls's, and telling what had occurred, Thurtell said: "Then I'm baked, but they could do nothing to him" (Probert). That night Thurtell and Hunt went to dig a grave, but the dogs were barking, and they were afraid some one was about. On Monday, while Hunt was talking to Mrs. Probert, he and Thurtell got the body up, and cut off the clothes. They then all three carried it to the garden gate, and put it into the gig. On the Friday night, Thurtell said, "I mean to have Barber Beaumont and Woods." The former was a director of the County Fire Office, who had brought the charge of conspiracy against the Thurtells; Woods was Thurtell's rival for the hand of Miss Noyes. A grave half dug was found in Probert's garden; but the soil was flinty clay, and it is supposed that Thurtell and Hunt were afraid of the noise pickaxes would make.

Some of the incidents of the trial were appalling; others ludicrous. A constable carefully unfolded the pistol from a white paper. It was a small blue-barrelled pistol, smeared black with gunpowder, and dingy red with blood. A piece of tow was thrust into the muzzle to keep in its horrid contents—the murdered man's brains. The short, curled hairs which had been literally dug from the victim's head were firmly glued to the back of the pan with crusted blood. This fearful instrument of murder made all shudder except the murderers, who were equally callous during the production of Weare's gun, his carpet bag, the shooting-jacket with the dog-whistle hanging

to it, the dirty leggings, the shoes, and the linen. The often-quoted reason for a man being respectable "because he kept a horse and gig" occurred during this trial; and when Probert's cook was asked whether the supper at Gill's Hill Cottage was "postponed," she answered, "No. It was pork."

Thurtell's speech in his own defence was written for him by his counsel, Mr. Phillips. He had learnt it by heart, and spoke it in a deep, measured, and unshaken tone, with studied and theatrical action. He denied that he was a callous, remorseless villain, depraved, profligate, and gratuitously cruel. He had fought and bled for his country (he had been in the Marines); but to raise the assassin's arm against an unsuspecting friend was horrid, monstrous, and incompatible with every feeling of his heart. He then enumerated a great many cases of persons who had suffered death innocently, from mistaken circumstantial evidence. He talked of his unstained and happy home, quoted St. Paul, entreated the jury not to cut him off in the very summer of his life (he was just thirty-one), wept, and concluded in these words, which he oratorically emphasised with appropriate and impassioned gesture: "I stand before you as before my God, overwhelmed with misfortunes, but unconscious of crime; and while you decide on my future destiny, I earnestly entreat you to remember my last solemn declaration—I am innocent, so help me God." "The studied, slow, and appalling tone," remarks a writer who was present, "in which Thurtell rang out these last words can never be imagined by those who were not auditors of it." He clung to every separate word with indescribable earnestness. The final exclamation, "God!" was thrown up with an almost gigantic energy. Yet, from first to last the whole was a performance that had been carefully premeditated.

Hunt, who was condemned to death with Thurtell, but was afterwards respited and transported for life, confessed that Thurtell had planned many murders, and had been hired by gamblers to get obnoxious men out of the way. He had tried to kill, with an air-gun, Mr. Osborne Springfield, a silk merchant, of Norwich, and also Mr. Barber Beaumont. He had decoyed Mr. Woods to his house in Manchester-buildings, and there waited for him with a large dumb-bell. Woods was frightened, and escaped. He had then planned to shoot him in bed, and pass it off as a suicide. He had also boasted that, when a lieutenant of marines, in the Bellona, he stabbed a wounded Polish officer at St. Sebastian, and took from his body one hundred and forty doubloons.

Hunt spent the night before execution with Thurtell. The prisoner shook him cordially by the hand at parting, and said, "God bless you. You have brought me to this situation, but I freely forgive you, and hope you will be reprieved and live to repent of your past errors. If you had had nerve like us, none of us would have been convicted of this crime; but I forgive you from the bottom of my heart."

One account, which describes this implacable ruffian as resigned and penitent, and as having read a sermon on the last judgment during the night before he was hung, does not harmonise with his well-known anxiety about the prize-fight between Spring and Langham, which took place on the previous day. "I know it to be a fact," reports one gentleman,* "that Thurtell said, about seven hours before his execution, 'It is perhaps wrong in my situation; but I own I should like to read Pierce Egan's account of the great fight yesterday.'"

He slept soundly till called; remarking, he never had had dreams "connected with this affair." He then breakfasted, prayed, it is said, received the sacrament, and parted with Hunt, hoping he would go abroad, live long, and die a happy man. He thanked the chaplain, and bade the under-sheriff and jailer good-bye.

The executioner and turnkey came and took off his hat and cravat, drew the white nightcap over his face, and put the cord round his neck. He merely said to the hangman, "Give me rope enough." To which the man replied, "Never fear; there is quite enough." The turnkey left the scaffold; the hangman mechanically pressed the prisoner's hand according to form, and left also. The next instant the platform fell with Thurtell. The body was then taken to the chapel, and in the evening put into a sack and driven in a gig (that day eleven weeks from the murder) to Bartholomew's Hospital, where Abernethy dissected it.

A cast of the murderer's powerful back, bowed as when the strangling bent it convulsively, we have seen in studios side by side with Madame Vestris's foot and the hand of Lucrezia Borgia.

Probert did not take his narrow escape much to heart, for only a year later he was hung at the Old Bailey for horse-stealing; the judges being only too glad to catch him tripping.

Years after the murder of Mr. Weare, the driver of the St. Alban's coach invariably slackened the speed of his horses when he crossed the bridge by Elstree, and point with his whip to the deep, lonely, roadside slough where the murdered man's body was found.

KÄTCHEN'S CAPRICES.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER VI.

It would be impossible to describe Josef Kester's anger and consternation when Kätchen confessed to him the result of her interview with Ebner. He stormed and raved in one—the ungovernable and rare fits of fury which now and then broke the calm of his phlegmatic nature. And then, when his passion had spent itself, he tried to coax his wayward daughter. She had changed her mind once, and might change it again. But it was in vain.

"He spoke so harshly to me," said Kätchen, taking refuge in an air of being injured.

"Harshly? And no wonder!"

"But he said such shameful things; called me cruel, and heartless, and dishonourable. If

* In the London Magazine for February, 1824.

ever I could have made up my mind to have him, his words to-day would have cured me of such a notion."

This was not quite ingenuous on Kätchen's part, seeing that she had found herself obliged to refuse him long before he had spoken those harsh words. I am sorry to have to record it, but I am trying to describe her as she really was. Besides, in her blind perversity, she actually began to think herself ill used. Her father fell into the snare, and, dropping his attitude of attack, assumed the defensive, and commenced to excuse and justify Ebner.

"Why, it's natural enough, too. What do you think the man's made of? Angry! If a girl had treated me so, after drawing me on——"

"I did not draw him on, father. I never had any idea he wanted to marry me until he spoke. Why, had you, yourself?"

"I told you I had. Of course I had. It seems odd to me that you could be so blind. You're quick enough generally. But all that is nothing to the purpose. What I go upon is, that you told me you would marry him. Told me so, of your own will; and now you say 'no,' without rhyme or reason. But I understand well enough that that underhand fellow, Fitz Rosenheim, is at the bottom of it."

And then he subsided into a growling, half-audible tirade against Fritz; and Kätchen sat silent and sullen by the stove, giving little heed to her father's words, but brooding over her own troubles.

The next day, Sunday, neither father nor daughter went to Hallstadt to church. Ebner's boatmen rowed up to the landing-place at the Golden Lamb, but were thanked and dismissed. Their master was not in the boat, but he was above forbidding his servants to go for the Kesters as usual. It was a dreary day within and without the Golden Lamb. That grimy quadruped creaked and moaned in the autumn blast. A dry choking dust blew in clouds over the empty desolate high road, and the lake wore a livid hue, and broke with a dull splash on the shore. Dusky and dreary the day had dawned, dusky and dreary still it went down, with one lurid line of crimson in the western sky. Josef lit his pipe, and sat puffing cloud after cloud, until the glow of the burning tobacco in his pipe-bowl was the only thing visible in the dark kitchen, except such streaks of light as penetrated through the chinks of the stove. Kätchen had taken out a hymn-book, and had read in it mechanically while the daylight lasted, but now she sat staring at her father's glowing pipe, and letting her thoughts go whithersoever they listed. And a wild dance they had of it, flying off to the unlikely things and places, but under all, like a pedal bass in a piece of music, was the drowning sense of pain and unrest.

"Hulloa! Are you all asleep here? No light? No welcome for a cold traveller?"

The cheery voice rang through the room, starting its inmates as if a bombshell had burst in their midst. Kätchen, whose nerves were unstrung, gave a sharp squeak like a frightened mouse. Old Josef started up, nearly oversetting his chair.

"Who's there?" said he. But he had known the voice well enough.

"Who but I, Herr Landlord? Fritz Rosenheim, at your service. Shall I light the lamp? And where can I find a lantern? for I must stable my beast. He's warm, and the breeze from the lake cuts like a scythe."

Without waiting for permission, Fritz lit the great old-fashioned oil-lamp that stood ready trimmed on the dresser, and proceeded to search for the lantern, like one who knew the house well.

"Stable your beast!" echoed Josef, recovering himself a little. "Ay, you may stable him, and that's all, for deuce a bit of provender you'll find to fill his belly with. There's mighty little entertainment at the Golden Lamb now, for either man or beast."

"Don't fret about that, Herr Kester. I've brought the piebald's supper along with me from Altenau. I thought how it might likely be. Here's the old horn lantern at last, and here's an end of candle ready to put into it." And honest Fritz bustled out to see to his horse.

"Are you going to stay here, then?" asked Kester, who had been staring open-mouthed at these proceedings. But Fritz was already unharnessing the piebald, and did not hear the question.

"Well, that's cool," said Josef, turning sullenly to his daughter. "He must mean to stay here. Then there are no travellers with him. Small thanks for his coming. If he had had any rich foreigners to convoy, it's the Black Eagle, and not the Golden Lamb, that would have been honoured by Herr Rosenheim's presence to-night."

"Of course it is!" answered Kätchen, sharply. None quicker than she to detect unreason and injustice in other people. "How could we entertain rich travellers? Haven't you just told him that you hadn't even a mouthful of hay for his one horse? How would it have been if he had brought the team?"

"Hold your tongue, saucebox. It's my belief you knew he was coming, and that it was all settled between you."

"You know you don't really believe that, father," she answered. But the accusation scarcely angered her. It was rather soothing to feel that, in this instance, she was blamed quite wrongfully. Kätchen did not mind being a victim up to a certain point, but she resented a merited rebuke with all the temper of a spoiled child. By-and-by Fritz's voice was heard shouting something; but the wind carried the words away.

"What is it?" asked Kester, standing shivering at the house door, and peering out into the night.

"Have you never a key to this outhouse where the cart stands?" bawled Fritz.

"A key? Thou dear Heaven! No; people don't want keys when they've nothing to lock up."

"Ay, but I have something to lock up, as it happens. See!" And he held the flickering lantern within the outhouse door, so as to show a light cart laden with luggage.

"How did you get the cart in?" asked Kester.

"Why, made the piebald back it in, before I unharnessed him. The door's wide enough. But I can't leave these things like this all night. They must be secured, somehow."

"Oh," sneered Josef, "they're so very precious, are they?"

"Yes; that they are," answered Fritz, simply. "Whatever is in trust, is precious. And these things are in trust to me. If you can't lock the door, I must sleep here all night along with them, that's all."

Kester began to relent. His sulky fits seldom lasted long, they gave him too much trouble, and he was yielding to the fascination of his old liking for Fritz, and the young fellow's pleasant straightforward manner.

"Nay, nay, we'll manage better than that," he said. "You would be found dead of cold in the morning. What are the things? Are they too heavy to be moved?"

"Not a bit too heavy; only I had a thundering long job strapping and packing them all on this morning, and I didn't want to have it to do over again. However," he added, after a glance at old Josef's helpless face, "it's no use standing talking all night, is it? Hang the trouble! A little more, a little less, it won't kill me, I dare say. If you'll just be so good as hold the lantern, that's all I'll ask you to do."

And Fritz set to work energetically, undoing buckles and cords, and soon had the luggage unpacked.

"There! That was easier to undo than to do," said he, laughing, "and there ain't many things in this world a man can say that of." The packages consisted of two tolerably heavy trunks, and a small square box covered with leather. With the landlord's help, Fritz dragged them all across the yard, and piled them in one corner of the kitchen; and then, after some ablutions performed in an adjoining back chamber, he returned to sit down to whatever supper might be forthcoming. It was a better one than might have been expected from old Josef's cry of poverty; and over the meal Fritz Rosenheim related how and why he happened to be making that mountain journey so late in the year, with but one horse and no travellers. The foreign lady and gentleman with whom Laurier had travelled as courier, and whom Fritz had driven to Salzburg, had there met with some country-people of their own, and had given them a glowing account of the lake and mountain scenery on the route. So charmed were the ladies of the party with the description, that they resolved on going by the same way to Ischl.

"They had too much luggage for a carriage to take," said Fritz, "so they wanted part of it sent on by carrier. They were not staying at the Golden Cross in Salzburg, or I dare say I should have got the job of driving them to Ischl; but I know the Kutseher employed by their landlord, he's one Hans Koch, a good sort of fellow. He came to me one night, and said that if I liked to undertake it, the land-

lord of the Archduke Charles, where these foreigners were staying, would employ me to convey the heavy boxes to the hotel at Ischl. Of course I said 'Yes.' It don't do to let a chance of a job slip; especially as these are about the last travellers we shall see till next summer. The roads are getting very bad, as it is. I thought I never should pull up that last hill just before you come to Altenau, and my load's none so heavy, either. However, here I am, safe and sound, and the worst is over. You see I was a little anxious, because they specially warned me that that little leathern box had valuables in it, and of course—"

He stopped abruptly. Happening to look up, he had caught Liese's lacklustre eyes fixed unwinkingly on his face. She was drinking in his words in her dull slow way, but with an eager interest apparent in her heavy countenance.

"Good evening, Liese," said Fritz. "I didn't see you before."

"No; I've only just come in. Just this minute I was up at the saw-mill with Heinrich Amsel's mother. You were talking, and didn't hear me come in. I don't know what you were saying."

The last sentence was a piece of characteristically clumsy cunning. Rosenheim laughed.

"Well, then," said he, "you must have grown deaf since I saw you last, Liese. However, I was not talking any great secrets."

But he did not resume the subject he had been speaking of; and presently, when supper was over, and the two women had washed and put by the plates and dishes, Liese went off to bed, saying she was tired; and her broad, heavily shod feet were heard making the old wooden staircase creak beneath their tread.

"I think our Liese is a great fool," said old Josef, without taking his pipe from between his teeth.

Fritz looked up with an amused smile, and knocked the ash off the end of his cigar against the stove, as he answered, "Well, I don't just think she's the wisest woman in the world, myself."

"No; but she's a great fool in one special thing. She's always with those Amsels up at the saw-mill. They're a bad lot, mother and son. Heinrich is a wood-cutter by trade, but four days out of six he is not at work in the forest at all. He just hangs about here and there and everywhere, skulking like a fox; and Liese is with him every spare moment she has.

"But I thought she was betrothed to him," said Fritz.

"Didn't I say she was a great fool?" retorted the old man.

Then he bade Kätchen get to bed, and hung his smoked-out pipe by its green cord on a nail—an infallible signal of his being ready to go to rest. Kätchen took up her little copper lamp with its wick floating in oil, and said, "Good night," tripping up-stairs with a step which her love-troubles had not yet robbed of its spring.

"What a light footfall she has!" said Fritz, listening.

But Josef only grunted. He declined to say a word having his daughter for its subject. He never would speak of her to Fritz. In truth, he knew that if once led into that topic, the young man would openly avow his love, and ask him to sanction his wooing. It would doubtless have been the right course for old Kester to speak frankly to Fritz Rosenheim, or at least, if he would not do that, to have kept his daughter out of the young fellow's way. But the right course is seldom quite an easy one; and Josef Kester never voluntarily faced a difficulty, mental, moral, or physical. So he grunted, as aforesaid, and was in a mighty hurry to see the lights out, and get to his bed. Fritz shouldered the little leather-covered case to carry it to his sleeping-room.

"The big trunks," said he, "would not be easy to walk off with in the night, but I shall feel better pleased to have this small box by my bedside."

"Pooh!" said Kester, "what whim has bitten you? Did you ever hear of anything being walked off, as you call it, whereabouts?"

"No; but it's as well to be on the safe side. If the things were my own, I wouldn't be afraid to leave them out there in the shed. Good night."

"I suppose you'll be starting early, Fritz?"

"As early as I can. The daylight doesn't last long, now."

"Good night, lad."

And the two separated, each to his rest.

CHAPTER VII.

THE following morning was dull and cloudy, and there was a feeling in the air, and a look in the sky, that betokened a fall of snow before long. Kätchen dressed herself almost in the dark, and groped her way down-stairs to the kitchen. There was no fire in the stove, and no preparation for breakfast. "That lazy hulking Liese," said Kätchen to herself; "to think of her not being down yet! I'll rouse her to some tune, in a minute." But, even as she spoke, she perceived that the house door had been unbolted, and was partly open. "Why, she's gone out, then!" exclaimed the girl, in a startled tone. "Where can she be?" She was advancing towards the door, when it was opened from without, and Liese entered, followed by Fritz. "Where have you been at this hour?" asked Kätchen, in the imperious way habitual to her.

"Don't you see? To get wood. There wasn't enough to fill the stove."

Liese spoke sullenly, and threw down a great log with a bang on the stone floor. She was panting, and her shoes were covered with dust.

"You've been running yourself out of breath, I declare," said Kätchen, gazing at her in astonishment. "You don't usually do things in such a hurry. However, it's as well that you are in a humour to make haste this morning. Be quick with breakfast."

Fritz, meanwhile, had been busied in putting on a new lash to his whip, glancing furtively at Kätchen whenever he thought she did not observe him. "I am early, too, this morning," said he, coming forward when Liese had lit the fire, and was making a great clatter of preparation in the scullery. "I went to have a look at the piebald. He's all right."

"Oh!" said Kätchen, languidly. "Yes; he's all right."

Kätchen was absorbed in measuring out the coffee. Fritz came close to her, and she felt his arm enfold her waist. "Won't you give a pleasant word to a fellow?" said he, piteously.

"How dare you do that?" exclaimed Kätchen, turning to transfix him with a haughty stare which would have done credit to a duchess.

Fritz dropped his arm as if Kätchen's little waist had been red hot. "Dare!" said he, and the blood rushed up into his brown face. "I did not mean to offend you, Mam'sell Katarina, but it seems that we can't get on together at all. When I am away from you, I long for nothing so much as the moment when I shall see you again; and yet when we do meet, somehow it's all wretched. It does seem hard."

Now, Kätchen had not meant to be taken quite au pied de la lettre when she asked Fritz how he dared to put his arm round her. It was simply a piece of coquetry. She had been feeling quite lofty with a sense of the sacrifice she had made of Herr Ebner on Fritz's behalf. She had persuaded herself that she had given up wealth and station all for his sake, and had meant to dazzle him, by-and-by, with a glimpse of her magnanimous behaviour. And now, here he was beginning by being aggrieved and hardly treated. Fritz was always so provokingly in earnest, and though he could not be aware that Kätchen had refused Ebner's offer, she was as perversely angry with him as though he had already known all about it.

"Indeed," said she, coldly. "Then if it's all wretched, as you say, I think it a pity that we do meet at all."

"Oh, don't say that, Kätchen! Why *should* it be all wretched? It need not be, if you would only——"

"Oh, thank you. Of course it's my fault. I am sorry that I happen to be so disagreeable in your eyes, but really I don't know how to help that."

"Disagreeable in my eyes! But you know that's just nonsense, Kätchen. I've told you how much I love you often enough to make you believe me, if telling would do it; but I think—I do think it shouldn't be quite all on one side. If you care for me, I have a right to say that much, Katarina."

"All on one side! Thou dear Heaven! Ungrateful, insensible creature! What do you endure for my sake in comparison with the sacrifices I make on your account? The greater fool I!"

"You make sacrifices for me, Kätchen? I know I'm not your equal in many things, but

I know, too, that a real honest heart is worth something to any woman who knows how to prize it."

"And do you think yours is the only heart in the world? I can tell you, Mr. Modesty, that I could have had a heart perhaps as honest as yours, if I hadn't been a fool and thought more of you than you merit."

"What do you mean, Katarina? You *must* tell me now. Fritz's voice trembled, and his sunburnt cheek grew pale with the strong effort to preserve his self-command. "Are you thinking of that man at the Black Eagle? Do you believe that he would marry you?"

"Believe it! I know it. He implored me to be his wife. I might have been rich—a lady—and father would have been provided for; but I said no."

"And why did you say no?" asked Rosenheim, with his teeth set and his chest heaving.

"Why did I say no?" Kätchen was furious. Was this the reception due to the announcement of her noble conduct? She did not reflect how she had been goading and irritating her lover into anger.

"I said no because I was absurd enough to think it would make you happy; but I see now how foolish I have been."

There was a minute's pause. The two young people stood opposite each other, she flushed and excited, he pale, stern, deeply hurt. At length he spoke:

"Well, Kätchen, I am truly sorry that I have been the obstacle in your path. I'm too sincere in my feelings towards you to say that I wish you to marry another man. I ought to, perhaps, but I fairly cannot. Only I'm grieved to the heart that you should ever have been hampered with a poor clumsy fellow like me, that has neither money nor land to offer you. And since—since you seem to repent what you have done, I'll leave you at liberty, now and for ever. You shall not have Fritz Rosenheim to blot out the sunshine from you." Kätchen was now standing at the window which looked on the lake, and had her head turned away from her lover. "Of course if you cared for me—ever so little," pursued Fritz, "that would alter the case; but you don't; I can see that." A pause. "You don't care for me," repeated the poor young fellow, with so wistful a look, that, if Kätchen could have seen it, her obstinate perversity must surely have melted away. But she did not see it. She kept her head turned from him towards the lake, and vouchsafed no answer. And in another minute it was too late to give any, for old Kester came hurrying down, and the breakfast was hastily set on the table.

The meal was taken almost in silence. Fritz was usually full of talk and mirth, but his light-heartedness had been effectually subdued; and Kester was dull and preoccupied. At last Fritz rose up with a great sigh, which came out unawares, and made him colour the moment afterwards.

"I must see to putting the luggage up,"

said he. "Will you mind giving a lift with the boxes, Liese?"

Liese's help was very different from old Kester's. She swung up one end of the great trunks as easily as Fritz himself carried the other, and the boxes were soon placed in the cart. Then came the strapping and cording. Fritz had had plenty of experience in such matters, but it nevertheless took some time to accomplish; for he was careful and anxious. The large trunks were put in first, and the small square box strongly secured on the top of them. Fritz went into the house to pay his score, and looked eagerly round the kitchen to see if Kätchen would not vouchsafe one word, even one look, to soften his regret. No, she was not to be seen. There was no one but old Kester, in one of his most depressed moods. When Fritz brought out the piebald from the stable to harness him, he found Liese still busy about the cart, giving some finishing touches to the cords and straps.

"Let be—let be, Liese," said he. "It's all right and safe enough. I'll warrant any knot of my tying to hold fast. And he tossed her a piece of money as he mounted into his seat. "Good-bye, Herr Kester," he cried out, and the old man came to the door.

"Oh, you'll be passing back again soon, Fritz Rosenheim."

"Well, no; I think not. It's likely I shall go from Ischl by the Traun-see to Grunden, and then—who knows?—perhaps even to Vienna. You won't see me again very soon, I'm thinking."

"Well, take care of yourself. I hope we shan't have snow before nightfall. You have a heavy load."

"Ay," said Fritz, as he drove out of the little yard and urged his horse along briskly; "ay, a heavy load, as you say. Not that the boxes are so much of a load, but I can understand now what folks mean when they talk of being heavy-hearted. My heart feels such a weight in my breast that I almost wonder the piebald can drag it behind him."

CHAPTER VIII.

MORE than a week passed away, uncomfortably enough, at the Golden Lamb. Kester's prediction about the snow had been verified. It had begun to fall on the evening of the day on which Fritz went away. But inside the house things looked yet more chill and dreary. Josef had accused his daughter of indulging in more "moonshine" with Rosenheim. He suspected that that hour they had been together in the early morning had been spent in love-making. But, to his amazement, Kätchen informed him that she and Fritz were thenceforth to be as strangers; that it was clear he did not really love her; that she cared nothing for him; and that so it was best that they each go their separate ways, and forget any absurd love-passages which might have taken place between them. Kätchen spoke

with a flippant laugh and an assumption of her old spoiled-child manner; but the effort was visibly a hard one. Josef was dumbfounded. All along, since the final rejection of Ebner, he had had a secret conviction that he should have at last to accept Fritz for a son-in-law; and, though he grumbled, his easy-going nature had begun to accustom itself to the idea. He liked Fritz. He had done his best for Kätchen. If she would be headstrong, was he to make himself miserable about it? But now the news he heard fairly bewildered him.

"Good Heaven above us!" said he, "who ever heard the like? Why, I believed in my soul that you refused Ebner mainly on that young fellow's account."

"So I did," said Kätchen, quickly.

"You did? You own that you did; and after giving up the best prospect ever girl had, on account of this lover, you go and throw *him* over as well! It's madness. Just stark staring madness, that's all I can say. God help you when I'm gone, my lass; for, as true as I'm a living man, I believe you'll never have such another chance."

And that was all the comfort Kätchen got from her father. But her own conscience said yet harder things to her. And these she had to listen to day by day, at all hours. In the dull grey mornings, amidst her household work, and mixed up with the whirr of the great spinning-wheel, or the click of the knitting-needles, she had to listen to these harsh truths, and to confess her faults with bitter self-upbraiding. For now that Fritz seemed gone for ever, she knew that she loved him, and that he had loved her a thousand times better than she deserved. Perhaps, poor, perverse, spoiled child that she was, there needed some such grief and some such parting to open her eyes to the truth. In spite of her vanity, and frivolity, and coquetry, she had a heart, as I have said before, and she suffered very really. She had not the relief of speaking of her sorrow. A remnant of wilful pride prevented her from confiding in her father; for she believed that Fritz must be wearied out with her caprices, and that his love would not be able to survive her unreasonable cruelty.

"Of course he will forget me in time," she said to herself, "and he will fall in love with some other girl, who will know how to value him. But I know how to value him now, and I love him too; only it is too late. Too late."

It must not be supposed that Ebner had resigned all hope of winning Kätchen from the result of that one interview by the lake. His anger had gone, but his love remained. He came down to the Golden Lamb two days after Fritz's departure, and found Kätchen alone. She was pale and weary, tired in body after a hard day's work, and she sat by the stove in the winter twilight, whilst great hot tears kept falling, every now and then, on the coarse worsted stocking she was knitting. Ebner could not see her distinctly in the dim light,

but the tone of her voice, as she greeted him, betrayed that she was not herself.

"Are you not well, Mam'sell Katarina?" asked Ebner, anxiously.

"Oh yes; quite well, only a little tired."

And then, by degrees, Caspar Ebner began to renew his suit, accusing himself of having been harsh and hasty, and pleading for forgiveness. Kätchen answered straightforwardly enough now. She was made sympathetic to another's sorrow by the pain in her own heart.

"O Herr Ebner, you were only too good to me. I am not worthy of it. But I want you to believe that I didn't mean to deceive you."

"I am sure of it, Kätchen. And how can't you think better of it, and say that one kind word that shall make me so happy?"

But this Kätchen could not do; and the refusal was more difficult to her now than it had been before. Ebner pleaded as best he could; asking not for love such as he offered, only for kindness and confidence. He would wait for the rest. Then Kätchen took a resolution.

"Herr Ebner," she said, firmly, though her pale face grew scarlet from brow to chin, "I have no love to give you. I love some one else with all my heart."

"Kätchen," said he, after a moment's silence, "when you spoke to me before, you told me you were beloved, but you did not say you loved. Am I to believe you false-tongued after all?"

"I didn't know it myself, then," answered the girl, simply. Many more words passed between them, but Ebner seemed to lose the hope he had held fast by from the first. Kätchen's feeling was too real and strong to be simulated. He perceived that she was in earnest now, whatever might have been her former giddiness. Strange to say, it never recurred to him to guess who the favoured lover might be. There was not a servant about the Black Eagle but could have given him the information, but Caspar Ebner was not a man to talk to his servants on such a matter. So he went out from Kätchen's presence that evening, unwillingly convinced that his suit was hopeless, but ignorant of the name of his rival. After all, what did it matter? If Kätchen were determined not to love *him*, what did anything matter? Before the end of the week, however, came news which caused a great deal of excitement in Gossau, and even Caspar Ebner found that his misplaced attachment had by no means deprived daily life of its interest and savour. There came a message to Josef Kester, from Fritz Rosenheim, importing that a great misfortune had befallen the latter. The leather-covered box had been lost or stolen, and search and inquiry were to be made for it all along the road. It was an unusual, almost unprecedented circumstance, and made a great stir in the village. Every one knew, and most people liked, Fritz Rosenheim, and the tale flew like wildfire. The peasant—a rough carter—who had brought the message to Kester, was lionised and cross-examined all day long. The demand

for beer at the Golden Lamb was greater than it had been for years past, and in spite of his sympathy with Fritz's trouble, old Kester heartily enjoyed the bustle and importance of his position.

"How was it, then, Hans?" asked a neighbour, making the twentieth time the question had been put that morning.

"Nobody knows. If they did, no need of all this bother," was Hans's sententious answer.

"But I mean, how does he *think* it happened? There are no thieves hereabouts, you know, and anything lost would be sure to be given back to the owner."

"Oh, *would* it?" said Hans. "Then it's all right."

In this laborious way—but surely if vanity feels no pain, curiosity heeds no trouble—bit by bit, the story was dragged from Hans; and this was his account. Fritz Rosenheim had reached Ischl after nightfall, on the evening of the day on which he left Gossau. The snow had been falling for some hours, and man and horse were stiff and cold and weary. Fritz had driven into the court-yard of the inn, and dismounted, leaving his horse and cart to the care of a friendly ostler. But it was not long before—being revived by warmth and meat and drink, he had visited the stable to look first at his beast, and then gone to the great room next the porter's lodge on the ground floor, where the luggage was deposited. Picture his consternation at finding only two packages! The leather-covered box was gone. All inquiries and examination elicited the same statement from the servants. There had been but the two black trunks on the cart when Fritz arrived. The testimony of the waiters, the porter, and the ostler, was positive on this point.

"Indeed," said the man, who had helped Fritz down, and afterwards unharnessed the piebald, "I did notice that the top cord was very loose, and seemed a deal too long, hanging down behind; but the boxes were secured by straps, so I thought it was all right enough."

Poor Rosenheim was like one distracted. The travellers to whom the luggage belonged had not yet arrived at Ischl, but they were expected daily, and how should he face them? How face the landlord of the Archduke Charles at Salzburg, who had trusted him? The people of the inn at Ischl tried to cheer him. The box had most likely dropped on the road, and been unheard falling on the soft snow. In that case it would be restored as soon as possible. The people were mostly honest enough in those parts. Every inquiry should be made. But, up to the time of Hans's arrival at Gossau, no tidings had been heard of the missing box. Caspar Ebner had come down to the Golden Lamb when the rumour reached him, and stood listening to

Hans with the rest. There was a chorus of comments, suggestions, and exclamations. All at once Liese muttered,

"Perhaps Fritz himself knows more about the box than any one else. He was mighty careful of it when he was here."

"That's a lie, whoever said it," exclaimed Ebner, turning quickly round. "Fritz Rosenheim, whom I have known from a child, is as honest in word and deed as the honestest man in Gossau. I wonder anybody should have the heart to cast a stone at him in his trouble."

If he had but known how near Kätchen came to loving him at that moment! Liese scowled, and launched what she thought to be a poisoned arrow in reply:

"Oh, I know one mustn't say a word against him here," said she. "I forgot he was Kätchen's sweetheart."

That was the first revelation Ebner had as to who was his rival. But he answered staunchly and almost instantly,

"Not a word shall be said against him here or anywhere else, whilst I am by to defend him. I have known and employed Fritz Rosenheim for years, and, I repeat, he is incapable of dishonesty in word or deed."

Kätchen walked up to him before them all, with streaming eyes, took his hand and kissed it. It is a common mark of respect in that country from inferiors to superiors. "You're a good man," said she, with a great sob. This little scene made a hush in the crowded kitchen. All eyes were fixed on Kätchen, but she did not seem to heed them. She was not thinking of herself at all. Presently the neighbours began to disperse. Not that they had by any means satiated their curiosity, but it seemed that Hans was becoming more and more hopelessly laconic under the influence of the vast potatoes of beer to which they had treated him with the idea of making him talk. And, besides, they had now fresh food for gossip, which could not be discussed there. It was a memorable day for the scandal-mongers of Gossau.

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